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ABSTRACT

This book, designed as a mentoring and training tool for experienced and new secondary school principals, is a guide for attaining what the authors call "authenticity." An authentic principal is defined as one guided by service and responsibility for students and staff. The book is written in narrative form through the eyes of a fictionalized central character, who, after teaching history and mathematics for seven years, has recently entered an administrative training program. Each chapter provides at least one self-directed skill-building exercise designed to assist in developing one's own authenticity. Ten chapters define authenticity and describe its attributes: having vision in school success; demonstrating compassionate caring for members of the school community; trusting yourself and those around you; empowering the school community; being competent; choosing things that will matter most and make a lasting impact; responding effectively to a variety of daily situations; viewing learning as an ongoing process; and productively using hindsight. (RIB)

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Creating Better Schools

hat Authentic Principals Do

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Louise L. MacKay
Elizabeth Welch Ralston

Creating Better Schools

What Authentic Principals Do

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Preface

This book is offered as a mentoring experience for secondary school principals and for those who aspire to these positions. Our work is based on the premise that there are many more caring and compassionate stories than our critics would have our constituents believe. Far too often, the accomplishments of the many thousands of dedicated educators are ignored as attention is drawn to the problems of society that flow over into our schools. As educators with combined experience exceeding 50 years, we have observed in hundreds of classrooms. In so doing, we have found legions of teachers and administrators who are giving the ultimate measure of themselves in an uphill battle to provide meaningful and positive learning for the students entrusted to their care.

We view these educators with great admiration for continuing to do those things that make the most difference in the lives of all individuals, especially those for whom soul-nurturing experiences are most scarce. We all need to hear about the trials and triumphs of everyday principals who are out there making a difference in our nation's secondary schools. These are people who "walk their talk," and now they are going to "talk their walk" by sharing their stories with you. We believe that this practical guide to authenticity can be used by practicing educators to find the uplifting messages and suggestions for implementation from their peers whom we have quoted. It is also intended to support new administrators as they seek to become good and true guides for the schools they lead. The presentation is such that leadership preparation programs can make effective use of this book as these attributes of authentic principals are studied.

This book is written in simple terms that do not rely on the jargon of a profession to present its message. Indeed, it is deliberately written in language that speaks to the hearts and souls of those who choose to consider its message. It is our desire to report the attributes of the authentic principal in a way that is meaningful and that serves to reinforce our belief that every individual has worth. We have chosen to write in chronicle form, narrating one young teacher's search for an authentic principal. The central character, Lee, is the "everyman" and the "everywoman" of principal preparation programs, representing both the men and the increasing number of women aspiring to the high school principalship. Because the English language lacks a neuter-gender personal pronoun, we have referred to Lee using the male gender.

Lee's story is based on both truth and fiction. Although we have attempted to give our central character life through our narrative, Lee, as well as the other people you will meet, is not representative of any one individual. Rather, these characters are composites of the many aspiring and successful administrators we have known over the years.

To prepare this book, in addition to our search of relevant literature, we interviewed many principals, who generously shared their own experiences and those of their colleagues. With our own 50-plus years in education, primarily as administrators and teachers of administrators, we also have stories to tell. The people whom you will meet, though composites, are authentic principals who have a lot to share with you.

Throughout our interviews and research, we have had as our focus the search for the answer to the question, what is an authentic principal? We found many different answers, but all of the responses resonated about the common theme that seems to be the guiding force in the lives of these special leaders. That theme is one of service and caring and the constant recognition of the obvious response to the question, "if not me, then who will serve the needs of the children and youth and prepare them for a beckoning future?" The accounts that follow include stories of love and compassion told to us by individuals whose voices sparkled with excitement as they spoke of the many important deeds that go unnoticed and unheralded every day in our schools.

Lee is a young high school teacher who has been teaching history and mathematics for the past 7 years. He has just enrolled in a program of studies at the university that will culminate in his endorsement for school administration. The program he has chosen is very unlike the program he undertook when he received his master's degree. This program is based on thematic units that encourage students to study and learn in a wide variety of modes. For example, only 15 students are in the class and they will attend classes together throughout a six-semester sequence of courses. This cohort has been carefully screened into the program because of their perceived potential for becoming the type of authentic principals the university's Department of Educational Leadership faculty members believe are most likely to be successful leaders in the 21st century.

In addition to discussions in classes with professors and peers and their scholarly research of the literature, the students visit schools, classrooms, teachers, principals, central office administrators, and a wide variety of community agencies to gain meaningful field experience. These searches and visitations allow Lee and other members of the cohort to share with readers some of the aspects of leadership that are often given scant attention. They strive to discover which leadership qualities provide the foundation for the basic goodness that makes a successful school.

Although the concepts are simple, do not let this lull you into believing that once these students follow the "list" they will win "Principal of the Year" awards. Nothing important is that easy, especially the school principalship. Many additional skills have to be mastered by these students for them to become capable school administrators. In addition, they will discover that the most challenging skill they have to master is that of coping with a lifetime of change. Nothing stays the same.

Nonetheless, it is clear that if their skills do not have a foundation of proven basic concepts, their leadership will have a hollow ring to it and those who observe these newly trained leaders as they attempt to go about their jobs will recognize that they are not authentic principals.

On that note, this book is dedicated to all of those who seek to make a difference in the lives of the leaders of the future by instilling in them an "authenticity detector" that will guide them through the challenges of each day. Through the shared wisdom of those individuals who have been and are presently "toiling in the trenches," we can readily recognize authentic principals. Because of their ability to demonstrate this proficiency and their focus on making a difference in the lives of students, the future of public education is one of hope and optimism.

This book is divided into ten chapters, each sharing information about one particular attribute of authenticity. Each chapter is then divided into sections that summarize the group's discussion of the concept, an examination of the relevant literature, and dialogue with a practitioner who shares personal experiences and anecdotes. Finally, we share the concept of reflective practice through a short list of some of the main points of the chapter along with a skill-building exercise that provides the reader with a tool for self-assessment.

Chapter 1 has as its focus the definition of an authentic principal. There are many authentic principals who are serving in our schools today. Because of programs for leadership training such as Lee and his classmates are experiencing, we have great faith that more authentic principals will be there to take over the reins as the current leaders move on to another stage of their lives.

Chapter 2 examines the importance of vision in the success of the authentic principal's school. It helps to differentiate between vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The reader is given many examples of the importance of the visioning process as part of a successful school setting.

Chapter 3 shares ways that authentic principals can demonstrate their compassionate caring for all members of the school community. Principals need to demonstrate caring to school families as never before.

Chapter 4 points out the importance of being able to trust not only those around you but yourself as well. Based on our experience and that of the many principals we have talked with about these concepts, trust is an essential component if true progress is going to be made by a successful school community.

The empowerment of the members of the school community is the focus of Chapter 5. Empowerment embodies risk taking on the part of the authentic principal as well as the individuals being empowered. But if the school's vision is going to become a true beacon of hope, then it is essential that those who are going to help it to shine have an opportunity to take risks and know they are supported in their efforts.

Chapter 6 discusses the need for the authentic principal to be competent. Competence can't be faked. Even very young children know when someone is not behaving naturally. Competence comes from having the responsibility of guiding a school and staying abreast of changes affecting teaching and learning. It isn't easy. It's just the only way to be authentic.

Chapter 7 helps the reader "sort the wheat from the chaff." There will always be too many things to do in a given day. The key to being successful is being able to choose those things that matter the most and have the greatest chance of making a lasting impact on the lives of students and the future of the school.

"Giving In/Standing Firm," the title of Chapter 8, appears to be a contradiction. But as also discussed in Chapter 7, knowing how to respond to the multitude of situations that come knocking on the principal's door each day is critical. Sometimes, the most important words a leader can utter are, "I made a mistake with that decision, we need to try another way." Only leaders who have competence, courage, and wisdom can do that effectively. Authentic principals possess these skills.

Chapter 9 reminds us that no matter how many books we read, how many classes we take, or how many professional meetings we attend, we will never be through learning. Rather than being overwhelmed with this realization, authentic principals say, "Let's go! We have so much more we can learn!"

The final chapter reminds us to reflect on the experiences we have as well as those we might have had as we ponder what the morrow might bring. Authentic principals know the value of hindsight and share with us some of the ways they go about finding time to reflect and how it makes a difference in the way they serve the schools and communities.

It is our sincere hope that our readers will glean some ideas from those authentic principals who gave us so much to think about. We owe all of those who talked with us and referred us to their peers a deep debt of gratitude. In the future, American education can and will meet its obligation to provide a beckoning future for every individual.

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To all these, as well as to all those who contributed to this work in any way, we say, "Thank you."

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We dedicate this book to our children
and to the future of all children.
May their future always be a beckoning vista.

1

In Search of Authenticity

Authentic principals are principals who walk the talk!

Lee entered the leadership lab with a healthy measure of skepticism. "Just like these colleges," he thought. "Always attaching new names to old ideas." The program was no longer called School Administration. The new name was Educational Leadership. The rows of desks that had been in the classrooms when he was working on his master's degree had been replaced by a conference-room setting. The adjoining computer lab was equipped with the latest technology for prospective principals to hone their computer skills in everything from word processing to PowerPoint and SPSS (whatever those were).

The professor, Dr. Lane, was already in the room, entering something on the computer and projecting it onto a screen for everyone to examine:

THE TEACHER'S CHIEF TASK IS
TO ACTIVATE AND AGITATE THOUGHT.

She explained to the 15 students gathered around the conference table that this would not be an ordinary graduate class. Instead, the semester would be spent in reading, writing, thinking, and having conversations about ideas. The primary assignment for the term would involve reading selections from both professional literature and the popular press. The professor stressed that the theme for this introductory course, "Creating Better Schools: What Authentic Principals Do," would be looking at the sometimes-opposing worlds of theory and practice to see how real principals in real high schools integrate the ideas promoted by such writers as Fullan, Murphy, Cunningham, Gresso, Sergiovanni, Covey, Banks, Bennis, and others into daily practice. The format for the semester would require weekly readings that would be discussed in the seminars in the leadership lab. Each member of the cohort was expected to contribute to the discussion and to keep a reflective log corresponding to the ideas in the literature, the seminar discussions, and individual observations in the field. Yes, fieldwork would be required. Each week, cohort members would conduct in-depth interviews with practicing high school principals, exploring the specific issues being discussed that week as well as any other related questions.

The professor explained that this course explored a different style of teaching from what most of them had experienced in the past. She explained that her role was to ask questions, question answers, challenge assumptions, and generally serve as an agitator. She talked about the connotations associated with the word *agitator*. She used the analogy of a washing machine's agitator to illustrate that part of the process involved stirring things up and swirling them around. She invited the cohort to join her in the agitation process and to choose agitation over "whitewashing." The difference between an authentic principal who is an agitator and one who is merely a whitewasher, she suggested, resided in the end results. The authentic principal views the role as one of visionary culture building through frequent discussions and mutually reinforcing dreams. A principal who is not authentic spends endless amounts of time in applying layer upon layer of "whitewash" to cover up problems. Ultimately, this cover-up will fail and situations that should have been handled when first discovered would become worse. Authenticity requires truth—not dodging the hard questions, but keeping the school's focus on its vision and leading the school as it moves toward an exciting future. Authentic principals do not engage in faking it. She referred to an article by Rishel and Tingley (1995) in the *Executive Educator* that likens authenticity to grace in leadership:

> Grace is the authentic assessment of the depth of one's character. Grace and authenticity often include elegance, dignity, stature, bearing and ease of movement. In wonderful instances these attributes are recognized as pervasive styles . . . hard to define precisely, but certainly recognizable when seen. And when seen among one's colleagues, renews the spirit. (p. 26)

Dr. Lane continued, "We believe that as professors of educational leadership, it is our responsibility to join in helping you become authentic administrators who will lead our schools into the 21st century. We have chosen you for this program because we see the potential you possess."

Dr. Lane further explained the philosophy of the department's approach to school leadership. She said that although many professors in other universities elected to play the part of "sage on the stage," the philosophy and style of the Educational Leadership's faculty could be more aptly described as "guides on the side." She pledged the support of all faculty who would serve as guides for each member of the class. The goal of the program was to lead the group to a fuller understanding of the body of knowledge related to school leadership. In addition, the group would obtain an understanding of how authentic principals currently working in the schools utilize this knowledge in their everyday work.

"Let's begin our conversation tonight by defining the word *authentic*," suggested Dr. Lane. "Webster's dictionary defines authentic as 'real, reliable and trustworthy.'

"However, I want you to think about this word in terms of school principals—what words you might use to describe an authentic principal." Students began to call out words and their Guide listed them on the computer for them to ponder. The list grew:

Genuine
Perceptive

Open-minded
Enabling
Kind
Predictable
Trustworthy
Fair
Mentoring
Accessible
Caring
Honest
Collaborative
Friendly
Visionary
Consistent
Dedicated
Collegial
Observant
Supportive
Compassionate
Competent
Facilitator

"Are there any of these words that you believe do not belong on this list, now that you have had a chance to look at them for a while?"

The cohort members looked at the list critically, but no one suggested that any of the words should be removed.

"Now, let's discuss how we believe an authentic principal demonstrates these behaviors." The students responded more quickly this time. They were beginning to be comfortable with sharing their thoughts.

Authentic Principals

- Walk their talk
- Are honest
- Have a vision for students' futures
- Care about competence

- Have high expectations not only for the students but for themselves and everyone associated with the school
- Genuinely like students, teachers, schools, and learning
- Give positive recognition to everyone
- Are risk takers
- Encourage teachers and students to challenge themselves

"That is an impressive list of behaviors," Dr. Lane observed. "Do you really believe that ordinary individuals like yourselves can accomplish these behaviors as school principals?" The students responded in the affirmative without hesitation. "What makes you so certain?" persisted the Guide.

"I'm certain because I have had the experience of working in schools where the principals were able to do all of these things and more," said one student. "Dr. Richmond was the person who inspired me to want to be a principal. No matter what came her way, she was able to take it in stride and say, 'Together, we can take care of this situation.' She clearly loved her job and she knew everyone's name, not just the best and worst students, but all the students, and she had a way of making everyone feel special. Something else she was always able to do was inspire each person to reach just a little higher than we might have been doing because we knew she believed in us and was certain that we could do it." Other examples were shared as the students spoke of the authentic principals who had been inspirational in encouraging them to choose educational leadership as their new venture in the profession of education.

"So," Dr. Lane summarized, "it is safe to say that authentic principals have to be people who do more than say all the right things. They have to even go beyond doing all the right things. They must not take a cookbook approach to leadership, mixing two parts of skill with one part of dedication!"

THE AUTHENTIC PRINCIPAL IS ONE WHO HAS ACHIEVED A BALANCE BETWEEN ART AND SCIENCE. AN AUTHENTIC PRINCIPAL NOT ONLY DOES THINGS RIGHT, HE OR SHE DOES THE RIGHT THINGS. AND ALL OF THEM ARE DONE WITH A GENUINE SPIRIT OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE FUTURE THROUGH IMPACTING THE LIVES OF THE LEARNERS.

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"Have I accurately summarized your thoughts on this?" Heads nodded in agreement and the cohort members appeared energized by the discussion.

"As you take a short break, I want you to think about the other side of the coin," instructed the Guide. "You have told me very clearly what an authentic principal does. When you return from your break, let's talk about the principals whom you believe are the opposite: The principals who are not authentic." Dr. Lane noted with satisfaction that as the students left the conference room for their break, they were talking animatedly among themselves. "It really does not take long for a group of individuals to become a cohort of learners," she thought to herself. "What a difference this is from the days when I felt that I had to perform as the fountain of wisdom and create long lists for the students to memorize and then regurgitate at some later point. I still have to prepare just as thoroughly, but by involving the students in their own learning, I know this type of instruction will inspire them to work and study and actually gain the understanding they need for the roles they want to attain."

When the students returned from their break, they all wanted to talk at once about the "other" type of principal. The Guide divided them into two groups and asked them to take a few minutes to generate characteristics and behaviors they believed were typical of "inauthentic principals." Then, they would compare and discuss their findings. When the two groups had completed their discussions, she asked for a volunteer to share the characteristics from the first group for everyone to contemplate.

One of the students quickly got up and inserted the following terms on the computer:

Inauthentic Principal Behaviors

Stagnant
Authoritarian
Autocratic
Insensitive
Isolated
Judgmental
Unapproachable

Manipulative
Uncaring

A volunteer from the second group added to the list:

Bureaucratic
Not diplomatic
Afraid to risk
Boss
Retired on the job
Untrustworthy
Inconsistent

"These are rather strong terms that you have used to describe these principals," the Guide pointed out. "Are you sure that these terms are not too negative?"

"Actually," replied one of the students, "my first principal could be described even more negatively. I taught at the high school where he was the principal for 5 years and he never once entered my classroom. He was on a power trip that was unbelievable! He always had 'important meetings' to attend, and as soon as school was over in the afternoon, if he had been in the building at all, he was gone. He made it quite clear that he was on his way to bigger and better things (read that as a higher-paying position), and with two assistants to take care of the paperwork and the discipline problems, he spent his time making sure that the politicians in the community knew him and believed that he could walk on water. He was a living example of the type of person who knows all of the correct things to say but does not actually do those things. I doubt if he could have identified all of the teachers in the school, let alone recognize very many of the students. He became an elected superintendent but only lasted one term. Evidently, it was not quite as easy to fake it in the central office. He is no longer in education and we are better off without him. He certainly did not have the characteristics that we have been using to describe authentic principals."

"I know exactly what you mean," said Lee. "I worked at a school where the principal seemed to think that the only role he had was to be the school manager. Instructional leadership was not in his repertoire of skills at all. In fact, I believe that is one reason he stayed in his office doing paperwork so much of the time. I don't believe he really knew what it meant to be an instructional leader."

"How do you suppose these individuals rose to these positions and chose to focus on the tasks that you are describing?" probed Dr. Lane. The cohort members were quiet for a few minutes as they contemplated the question. They found it difficult to find reasons for the type of behavior they had been describing after focusing on their frustrations.

Finally, one student remarked, "Well, for one thing, I don't believe that the type of principals we have been talking about thought of instructional leadership as their job. Many of them had been prepared with a behavioral science mentality and had very little classroom experience with subject matter. Also, when they were attending graduate school and learning about school administration, it is more than likely that they were taught to be good managers and follow the models of Arts and Science or Business rather than models of Educational Leadership."

"That is one observation," replied Dr. Lane. "The training of school personnel has followed numerous philosophical and political trends supported by the public and school board leaders. Principals may have actually been caught in the middle. By not maintaining a vigilance over the main role of a school—to educate students—they succumbed to a focus on tasks with which they were comfortable. Remember, many of them were doing what they felt they had been chosen to do. They were often rewarded by the community and their supervisors for managing a 'good' school."

"I have never thought about how these principals might have become the way they are," said several of the students. "It actually makes them seem more human and you feel a certain amount of sympathy for them. It would be extremely challenging to move into a job that you believe is structured in a particular manner only to discover that it is altogether different."

"It is always important to remember that people have reasons for taking the actions that they take," explained the Guide. "We do not do things in a vacuum. Even bad decisions were probably made for a reason that was quite clear in the mind of the individual at the time. As principals, this aspect of leadership, taking the time to try to ascertain the underlying reason for the actions of students, teachers, parents, and peers, can provide you with answers that you may never get through any other method."

The session ended with a review of the assigned readings for the next week prior to their field visits. The Guide explained that at the next seminar, they would focus on high school principals and shaping a vision for their schools. The reading list was eclectic, to say the least. It was obvious that the students' interest was piqued. The Guide smiled to herself as she watched them leave. Next week's conversation would definitely be one that would "agitate and activate thought."

Journal Notes

1. A teacher's chief task is to activate and agitate thought.
2. Professors can be "guides on the side" rather than "sages on the stage."
3. Authentic principals are focused on sharing the school's vision.
4. Authentic principals do "the right things."
5. Authenticity is the assessment of the depth of one's character.

SKILL BUILDER 1.1

The Authentic Principal's Authenticity Skill Check Self-Assessment

Perceptive			
Do you pay attention to the little things happening at your school?	yes	no	seldom
Do you help your faculty and students by reading between the lines?	yes	no	seldom
Trustworthy			
Do your faculty talk openly and honestly with you?	yes	no	seldom
Do you engage in positive faculty room chatter?	yes	no	seldom
Consistent			
Are you fair and thoughtful in all situations with all students and faculty?	yes	no	seldom
Do you step to the plate when the situation calls for action?	yes	no	seldom
Accessible			
Can you always be found?	yes	no	seldom
Do you spend as much time in the school as in the office?	yes	no	seldom
Visionary			
Do you share the school's vision at every opportunity?	yes	no	seldom
Do you discuss the way the school's vision can be implemented by faculty and students?	yes	no	seldom
Supportive			
Do you back up your talk with supportive behaviors?	yes	no	seldom
Are you empathetic and aware of problems faced by faculty and students?	yes	no	seldom
Collaborative			
Do you seek opportunities to work with students, faculty, parents, and community?	yes	no	seldom
Are you a quality resource for those seeking information or help?	yes	no	seldom
Dedicated			
Do you go the extra mile?	yes	no	seldom
Are you committed to being professionally current?	yes	no	seldom
Open-minded			
Do you make certain that you consider alternatives?	yes	no	seldom
Do you value creativity, innovation, and different perspectives?	yes	no	seldom

Circle the answer that best describes your response.
Reflect on your answers—authentic principals exhibit a high level of trust.

SKILL BUILDER 1.1

Continued

Facilitator

Are you patient enough to help others work through problems?	yes	no	seldom
Do you encourage expression and reflective thought?	yes	no	seldom

Reflect on your answers; every individual has room for improvement every day!

SKILL BUILDER 1.2

Ways I Can Alter My Actions to Provide Greater Consistency and Reliability as an Authentic Leader

Planning:

Decision Making:

Accessibility:

Job-Enrichment Techniques:

Effective and Meaningful Progress Measures:

Supporting and Trusting Others:

Collaborating With Others:

2

Having a Vision

> *A vision is not a statement of practicality, but a statement of dreams. More precisely, it is the link between dreams and action. Dream your most vivid, lucid, idealistic dreams and they can become your possibilities for the future. Dreams are measured by such terms as inspiration, alignment, empowerment, and noble purpose. Each communicates values, quality, creativity, and purpose.*
>
> —Cunningham and Gresso (1993, p. 96)

As Lee entered the seminar setting, he was intrigued by the quote that was projected on the computer screen. He turned to one of his peers, "I don't know about you, but I think that a statement of a vision such as this quotation proposes is fine for individuals, but I cannot imagine that you could implement such an idealistic notion in today's schools, there are just too many roadblocks." Dr. Lane overheard his remark and turned to the rest of the cohort with a smile on her face.

"How many of you think that Lee is correct in his assessment of implementing a vision at the school level?" Several students raised their hands. Several others looked thoughtfully at the screen as they processed the concept of a vision for a school.

Finally, one of the students spoke up. "I believe it is important to have dreams and visions. I believe that one of the reasons we are in this cohort is because we want to make a difference in the lives of students through enlightened leadership. On the other hand, I am not sure implementing a vision that encompasses the entire school is a realistic objective."

Dr. Lane nodded and said, "How do some of the rest of you feel about this concept? How does it fit with our discussion of the characteristics of authentic principals that we talked about last week?"

Another student spoke up. "I can think of specific individuals succeeding in creating a visionary school, but I think most schools limit their attention to such concepts as vision, mission, and goals for their school to the time accrediting organizations visit. Then, when the visitors leave, they go on about business as usual. At least, that has been my experience in the two secondary schools where I have taught."

"I believe the only way to lead schools into the 21st century successfully is to have the skills to successfully provide visionary leadership."

"I honestly believe that by working with the entire school community and reaching out to involve the parents, the businesses, and others who want to make a difference in the future, we can make our visions a reality," another student stated emphatically.

"I have a problem understanding the difference between visions, missions, and goals," said another student. "Could we talk about how these differ and yet fit together?"

"Certainly," replied Dr. Lane. "Do any of you have suggestions as to how these three concepts can be defined?"

"I believe that a vision is a future that you can see with your heart and your mind, it is a 'mind picture' of what you think can happen in the future," one student ventured.

"Yes," said another. "It is somewhat like having children. If you cannot envision a future for them that is happy and productive, you are less likely to want to be a parent."

"There are some similarities between visions, no matter where we focus our energies," agreed Dr. Lane. "So, if we agree that a vision is a mind picture of the future, then how would you define a mission?"

"I believe a mission is what the school or an individual states as the reason for being," replied Lee. "Each school must articulate why it exists and what it stands for. It can provide the foundation for setting goals and objectives that tie in with the vision of where the school wants to be in the future."

"Is that a definition that we can all accept?" Dr. Lane asked the cohort. As she observed the nods of agreement, she added to the definition of a vision Lee's definition of a mission: A mission statement is a statement of what a school stands for.

"Now, does anyone have a definition for goals?"

One of the students spoke up. "I believe that goals are the products or behaviors that we expect to achieve in relation to our vision and our mission."

"So, you're suggesting that the way to define the terms is to look at them as becoming more behavioral as we move closer to implementation?" The students nodded in agreement. Dr. Lane added to their previous definitions: A goal is a product or behavior that is an objective based on the school's vision and mission. "So, the three aspects of knowing where you are going are as follows."

A VISION IS A "MIND PICTURE" OF THE FUTURE

A MISSION STATEMENT TELLS WHAT A SCHOOL STANDS FOR

A GOAL IS A PRODUCT OR BEHAVIOR THAT IS AN OBJECTIVE BASED ON THE SCHOOL'S VISION AND MISSION

"Does that clarify the relationship and the way the three concepts fit together? I believe we have captured the essence of the connections among these concepts with the definitions that you have developed." The students reflected on the statements and indicated their agreement with the content.

"Now, we need to think about how to develop and implement these ideals. I sense that many of you have not had particularly

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positive experiences in the school settings with which you are most familiar." Many students nodded their heads in agreement. "It is true that not every school actively pursues a vision, but there are many schools that have done so quite successfully. It is our belief that you will be able to do this when you become administrators. This will make a great difference between the authenticity of your leadership and those leaders who simply do not believe they have the power or the knowledge to make visions reality. As we have discussed through our clarification of successful authentic principals' behaviors, they walk their talk by seeking a shared vision created by the shareholders of the school. This includes the community members as well as teachers, parents, and students. All of these individuals have a stake in the future of the school. The concept and vision of the school residing in an ecological system that constitutes the larger surrounding community, including the concept of 'Spaceship Earth' is an essential way to preserve the future for those who will come after us. The visionary leader values the quality of life in the present and future and will not be satisfied with second best.

"A futuristic orientation helps authentic principals assess more accurately the impact of day-to-day decisions and keeps them aware of the need for excellence. Our visions and actions reflect what we want to create and are founded in our values and beliefs. By creating a vision through collaboration with the major stakeholders of the school, authentic principals create a bonding agent that holds members together as they work toward a common goal. A shared vision gives the culture a purpose and unity, supporting the harmony of the individual visions that each member brings to the school community. The resulting symphony can be a wonder to behold and does not require the accouterments of fancy dress or elaborate orchestrations—it simply requires everyone singing from the same page, not in unity but in harmony!

"A major difference between authentic principals and those who are not may rest in their belief that they lead a wonderful orchestra and the harmony they create leads to an exciting vision of the future. Without hope and vision from the leader of the orchestra, there is little chance they will be able to produce beautiful music together now or in the future. The authentic principal believes passionately in the strength of a vision to provide a meaningful future for the school community and will not allow a discordant member to spoil the music. When you return from break, we will examine the related passages."

Related Passages

"As we noted in the passage from Cunningham and Gresso (1993), a vision is verbalizing our dreams of what the future can be. It can serve as the link between dreams and actions. Others have written about the importance of leaders having a vision of where they are going and how to assess the effectiveness of a vision (MacKay, 1994). For example, Tom Peters (1994) suggests eight criteria for examining a vision." A vision

- Must inspire
- Challenges all members of the organization
- Stands the test of time
- Is evolutionary
- Guides members during times of chaos
- Empowers
- Exists in the future
- Is achieved through thousands of small, often insignificant decisions

One of the students exclaimed, "I don't understand how a vision can be both evolutionary and stand the test of time." Dr. Lane turned to the rest of the class and asked if anyone would like to clarify those points.

Lee spoke up. "From the way I am interpreting this concept of vision, it will always be in the future because every day brings new changes and new challenges. We have to look at everything we do as being dynamic because otherwise we will find ourselves holding on to visions and dreams that are no longer futuristic. We will have to constantly examine and reevaluate if our mind picture of the future is still relevant for the students and the school community as they change. Students leave our schools, new methods and technology change the way we do things daily, community members and parents move away and new ones take their place. The only way we can keep our vision is to examine its relevance for the changed situations that come to us."

"I agree," another student said enthusiastically. "I recall reading Deal and Peterson (1994), who spoke of a vision for a school as the 'unconscious sentiments, expectations and hopes that carry the code of the collective dream to the high ground to which the members aspire' (p. 30)."

Another student spoke up: "Calabrese, Short, and Zepeda (1996) also discuss the development of a common vision."

> The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It has to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet. . . . However, a vision is not a dream that is conjured up in an office while the principal contemplates the future. A vision is value driven and marks the distant goal through which progress is constantly measured. It is the beacon that allows the organization and its members to continually course correct as they develop a constantly clearer orientation toward the vision. . . . It is specific enough so that all members of the organization understand where they are heading and yet, it is general enough to allow members of the organization room for creativity in moving toward fulfilling the vision. (p. 66)

Dr. Lane nodded and said, "Fullan (1996) describes vision building as 'making a connection between the forces of change and of moral purpose.' The state of disequilibrium in which we now exist makes us question how the wonderful technology and other innovations that are available to us can best be used to accomplish a greater good. Fullan views educators as the moral change agents in society and further advocates the idea that purposeful change is the new norm in education."

Lee spoke up at this point. "I was particularly inspired by reading Goodlad (1990), who also promoted the idea by saying, 'Teaching in schools carries with it a moral imperative which includes developing educated persons who acquire an understanding of truth, beauty, and justice against which to judge their own and society's virtues and imperfections' (pp. 48-49). This is a dramatically different paradigm for education. Rather than viewing the school as a place where we go to find answers, we can visualize schools as places where we are trained to ask questions. We may question truth and justice and engage in critical reflection about one's own self as well as about the larger society. I find that exciting to envision as part of my future as an authentic principal." Dr. Lane smiled at his enthusiasm.

Another student spoke up. "I was moved by the quote from Bennis (1989), who said, 'It is the ability of the leader to reach the souls of others in a fashion that raises the consciousness, builds meaning and inspires the human intent that provides the power to lead' (p. 109).

"That is an inviting perspective. I have noticed that the literature you have been having us read is truly inspirational and lets us know that the dreams and ambitions we have for leading schools to positive and exciting futures are possibilities."

"My favorite reading was the material by Peter Senge (1990)," pointed out another member of the cohort. "Senge stressed that 'a learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality and how they can change it' (p. 13)."

"As a music teacher, I was particularly impressed by the metaphor DePree (1992) used when he spoke of the visionary principal being like a lead saxophone player in a jazz band," smiled another member.

> The principal carries the tune part of the time, but also extemporizes and allows fellow musicians the same freedom. In the end, they make wonderful, exciting music together by using everyone's skills to the fullest. The beautiful music produced creates a climate where the product and the process is appreciated and enjoyed by all. Consequently, sensitive leaders need to meet the needs of the school family with dignity and inclusiveness that allows the harmony of individuality to be heard loud and clear. (p. 8)

"The images that I see as a result of such a beautiful metaphor are very inviting."

Dr. Lane looked around the group and smiled. "In summing up our passages tonight, I would just remind you that all of these readings have emphasized that creating a shared vision focuses our thinking and decisions on developing an ideal learning community. It is a collaborative process that should be the product of an effective work culture. Members of a dynamic organization internalize and live the vision. The authentic principal accepts the role of facilitating the process of creating a shared vision and then models behaviors, communicating the vision and using it to guide decisions in the process of continuous improvement.

"I remind you that each of you has a visit scheduled with a school principal in the area before our next class session. I am sure you will gain important insight from what the principals have to share with you. I would anticipate that our discussions and readings will bring some questions to your minds about how these authentic behaviors are implemented. Enjoy your visits. Remember our focus next week is on caring.

"There is one other passage I would like to share with you before we conclude tonight." Dr. Lane explained that the quote came from Margaret Wheatley and that it captures the essence of reaching out to the future with excitement and anticipation:

> Were we to become truly good scientists of our craft, we would seek out surprises, relishing the unpredictable when it finally decided to reveal itself to us. Surprise is the only route to discovery, the only path we can take if we're to search out the important principles that can govern our work. The dance of this universe extends to all the relationships we have. Knowing the steps ahead of time is not important; being willing to engage with the music and move freely onto the dance floor is what's key. (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 7)

Voices From the Field

Lee had scheduled his first interview with the principal of a large suburban high school in a nearby school system. The school had one of the largest student bodies in the area, nearing the 2,000 mark. The principal, Roger Phillips, was a man in his late 40s who was himself enrolled in the doctoral program at the university. He was one of the high school principals suggested by Dr. Lane as a good source of information, because he had served in this position for 4 years.

The principal was quite willing to talk to Lee and mentioned that he expected to be interviewed by other members of the cohort throughout the semester. Part of his own program requirements involved serving in a mentoring role to prospective principals, and participating in these interviews was a part of that mentoring. Additionally, Mr. Phillips said that he genuinely enjoyed the opportunity to talk with other professionals. He noted that the job of a secondary school principal was a lonely one. Most systems have few people occupying this position, and typically there is neither time nor opportunity to discuss the work of the school with others. The principal said that it had been his experience that he gained as much as he gave during the mentoring process. Discussing ideas with people engaged in their own study of the principalship brought the opportunity to share ideas and to view the school from different perspectives.

Lee began the interview by asking the principal about his vision for the school. Mr. Phillips said, without hesitation, that the vision statement for the school had been agreed on by all members of the school community. "Our vision for this school is to have every student recognize that he or she is important and that we will help each of them to reach the success to which they aspire. This vision encourages everyone associated with the school to realize that students are not cut out with a cookie cutter, with the same hopes and aspirations for their future. We believe that all students should be literate, able to read, write, analyze, and articulate their goals and aspirations. By focusing on the individual, even in a school this size, we gain the support and help of students, parents, teachers, and members of the larger community much more readily than if we tried to look at our students as a single mass. We have a motto that reflects our vision in a way that all of our shareholders understand: 'SUCCESS FOR ALL.' We realize that a motto cannot completely express our vision. However, that short phrase keeps us all mindful that our focus on the needs of individual students and the support given to them as they move through the experiences we provide for them is the most important thing."

Lee asked Mr. Phillips how he went about developing a vision for the school.

Mr. Phillips replied that he had envisioned in his mind prior to becoming principal that the ideal school for him would be one that could focus on the needs of each individual student no matter how large the school might be. His own experience in high school had heightened his awareness to the disproportionate amount of attention given to the small number of outstanding students and seriously troubled students found in the classrooms. The much larger group of students who came to school, did their work, stayed out of trouble, and made midlevel grades seemed to be overlooked. "However," Mr. Phillips continued, "we all need to feel, and especially our young people, that we are special and important. That our goals and dreams are just as relevant to society as those of the 'star' or particularly needy student. Who knows what exceptional talents the 'average' child may possess? We must make it a priority to challenge these individuals to seek out their hidden gifts."

Lee sat in reflective silence as Mr. Phillips continued, "I vowed when I entered the profession of education that each student would know that I respected, cared about, and wanted to support him or her in becoming the most successful individual possible. Consequently, one of the first things I did after becoming principal at this school was to initiate a dialogue with the teachers, staff, students, parents, community, and district leadership. Fortunately, the whole system was engaged in a renewal process that required us to think about what we were doing. The hardest part of my job involved convincing people that this was not just an academic exercise in dreaming of a vision that would focus on the individual in a new and energetic manner. Many of them said they had gone through the process of writing down the vision, mission, goals, and objectives before. Once everything was written down, it was as though that was all there was to it. I was aware that in a recent survey of principals (Muse, 1997), a large number of those interviewed could not state any of the above items and were not even sure that the schools had such statements from the past.

"I suspect that my obvious determination that we were not going to back down from this dream helped me gain their trust. You see, Lee, trust is so critical to the process. It only takes a few times of trusting someone in a position of power to honor the dreams and aspirations that we share with them for us to know whether they are just talking to say the things we want to hear or if the leaders really do walk their talk. I convinced them that I would walk my talk because they recognized that all of us claimed ownership to the vision. Everyone wants to succeed, but not everyone feels empowered to succeed. I promised empowerment and I have delivered empowerment.

"At this high school, we force ourselves to look beyond the problems to find solutions. The first thing we have to move beyond is our own self-imposed limitations. Joseph Campbell (1989) spoke the truth when he said, 'Basically, the vision quest involves getting past your own limitations, which are within even as they appear to be without' (p. 28). The limitations without are pretty evident. It's the limitations within, our lack of courage, energy, and commitment that we must really do battle with. During our visioning process, we allowed ourselves to look at the negative in much the same way Scrooge was given a glimpse of Christmas future. We looked at how life would likely be for the students we serve if the natural course of events were allowed to unfold without any intervention on our part. Then we asked ourselves, 'What kind of future do we want it to be?' We talked about Joel Barker's (1992) phrase 'inventing the future.' We decided that the future we wanted to construct for our students was one in which all students succeed. At that time, we determined that this should be the vision for school. We believe that every public school should provide a nurturing environment in which all students experience success and develop the skills necessary to be successful in the future.

"Although we have no control over what other schools choose to do, we affirmed that we could achieve such a vision if we worked together and provided support and encouragement for each other and all members of our extended school family."

Lee asked, "And how did you go about communicating that vision and getting everyone to trust the visioning process?"

Mr. Phillips replied, "That was a challenge, of course. Once you claim a vision, you have a charge to successfully communicate the vision. The old saying, 'It's hard to be a leader when no one is following,' is an apt descriptor of what happens to principals who fail to successfully communicate. I've found that one of the best ways to communicate is through 'professional conversation.' At this school, we have a principal and six assistant principals. When I came here, I asked all administrators to engage in professional discourse with faculty and staff at every opportunity. It's appropriate to spend some time talking about sports or the weather or what's newsworthy at the time, but we must always get back to the business of the school. One mark of an effective school is that teachers talk about their craft with their colleagues. Principals must encourage and support this type of conversation, and it can't be just between administrators and teachers. The conversation must include all in the school community—students, parents, businesspersons, everyone. If the vision is increasing student achievement, then this must be the talk of the school and the community.

"We often hear the expression, 'Walking the walk and talking the talk.' The implication is that good principals, authentic principals if you will, do what they say. There's a congruence, a harmony, between what they put in their school's vision, mission, philosophy and how they actually lead a school. However, I believe that it's equally important for us to 'talk our walk.' Sometimes, we're so busy with the business end of what we do that we fail to talk about what we're doing. That's why in this school we have a communications committee. It's the job of this group to promote all the good things that are happening in our school, both with the internal constituencies and the external community members.

"It's amazing how little teachers know about what's going on in the classroom next door. Teaching can be such a lonely business. The door closes each morning and we go into our own little world and seldom come out to talk to each other. This message really hit home one day during my first year as principal at this high school when a supervisor came from the central office to see a new computer-assisted instructional program in physical science. Since it wasn't quite time for a class change, she stopped off in the teacher workroom to wait and talk with the teachers who had a planning period that hour. She discovered in the course of that conversation that none of the other teachers present, including another science teacher whose room was next door, even knew about the new program. That hit me hard. I had just assumed that everyone knew what was happening, even though I hadn't taken any action to ensure that everyone knew what was going on. I decided right then and there that I wouldn't let that happen again. There we were with one of the most innovative programs in the state, only three other school systems had this particular program, and the other teachers in the building had not heard about it! Even more alarming was that the teacher was making presentations at state conventions about how great the program was and his own colleagues hadn't heard about it.

"That's when I developed a communications committee. Of course, we have a newsletter, but we go beyond that. We take time in our faculty meetings to talk about what we're doing. We've remodeled our teacher workroom to facilitate more dialogue among teachers. We've added furniture that is more relaxing than the standard series of worktables, straight-backed chairs, and copy machines.

"We charged this committee with the responsibility of improving communication with our community. Of course, we have a vision for our school. It's written in all the right places—in our school handbooks and so forth. But we know that is not sufficient to get the job done. We've got to get the message of what we are trying to accomplish for children at this school out to the larger community. We can't expect to get the support of parents and community leaders if they aren't informed.

"For anyone considering this approach to improving communications, I can offer some good advice based on my experience. First, be sure that committee members clearly understand what the vision of the school is and that we are committed to the realization of that vision. It is important to spend some time working on this. A weekend retreat is one strategy we found to be effective. Getting people together in a relaxed setting where there's a free exchange of ideas is the best way I know of to start this kind of professional conversation.

"Another bit of advice is to be sure that the people who are on this committee are excellent communicators themselves. The committee should be composed of people who are successful oral and written communicators. There's nothing more embarrassing than sending out a newsletter or a memo to parents with grammatical errors. The public has a right to expect that the faculty and staff of a school are literate individuals. We ask that all written communication going out of the school be proofread by at least two people, and we don't depend on spell check to catch every error. We don't want our message to fall victim to our medium. If we're to communicate clearly, we've got to speak clearly, positively, and with one voice. We don't try to exercise tight control over our communication in that we don't practice censorship. But we do work hard to be sure that the messages sent are those intended to be sent. There's a lot less damage control that way.

"As important as the written communication is to a school, the oral communication is perhaps more so. Every member of the school is involved in the school's public relations program and serves as a spokesperson for the school. Last year, we formalized this process by creating a speakers' bureau. Teachers and administrators volunteer to speak to civic clubs and community groups about the school or about their own special areas of experience or interests. We have teachers out there talking—talking about the school, the good things that are happening here, computers, books, ideas, and most of all about how our students are making our vision a reality. That's how to communicate a vision."

Lee smiled and said, "Mr. Phillips, I certainly appreciate the time you have spent with me today. You have enriched my learning and my spirit. I, too, have the dream of supporting the success of all students in whatever role I have. You have given me many ideas that will help me make that dream a reality. You are doing wonderful things at this high school, and I know from talking with my peers from all over the region that this is a positive, energizing institution that seeks and supports only the best. That is quite an accomplishment, and I am eager to have the opportunity to follow your example."

Journal Notes

1. A vision is a "mind picture" of the future.
2. Authentic principals "walk their talk" by seeking a shared vision created by the shareholders of the school.
3. Teaching in schools carries with it a moral imperative to make the connection between the forces of change and moral purpose.
4. Schools should be places where we are trained to ask questions and engage in critical reflection.
5. Sensitive leaders need to meet the needs of the school family with dignity and inclusiveness that allows the harmony of individuality to be heard loud and clear.

SKILL BUILDER 2.1
A Collaborative Process for Creating a School Vision

1. Internalize the vision.
2. Capture the ideal.
3. Constantly update your knowledge basis and commitment to continuous growth and development.
4. Involve all members of the school community in implementing the vision.
5. Empower the members of the school community to take risks in relation to the vision.
6. Constantly assess the school culture to make sure that it continues to support the school vision.
7. Help all members of the school community understand that a vision is dynamic and will need to be constantly reassessed in terms of the student needs and goals.
8. Create a safe environment.
9. Communicate your trust in the ability of the school community to "walk its talk."
10. Remember to say "thank you" to everyone for their support and enthusiasm.

SKILL BUILDER 2.2
Touchstones for Change

1. Maintain a clear focus on your vision.
    Keep your goals in mind.
    Maintain both long and short views of situation.
2. Embrace resistance.
    Recognize this is a counterintuitive response, but that without it you will not experience success.
3. Respect those who resist.
    Agree to disagree with others in civil fashion.
    Listen with an open heart and mind.
4. Relax.
    Stay calm to stay engaged.
    Learn the causes of resistance.
5. Build support for change by blending your intentions with the resistance.
    Begin together.
    Change the plan if appropriate.
    Find themes and possibilities.

SOURCE: Adapted from Maurer (1996).

3

Caring Compassionately

We leave traces of ourselves wherever we go, on whatever we touch.

—Lewis Thomas (1990, p. 167)

As Lee and the other graduate students entered the seminar setting, they examined the Lewis Thomas quotation displayed on the overhead projector and pondered its meaning in terms of their own leadership skills. Dr. Lane, in her now familiar role as the Guide, waited quietly for someone to respond to the quote.

Finally, one of the students said, "That's a strong statement. It makes me wonder what I've done in the past that perhaps inadvertently hurt someone. It makes me uncomfortable to think that everything I do is being monitored on some sort of chalkboard in the sky!"

"Oh, I don't think so!" another student blurted. "I do not interpret that as a judgmental statement at all. I believe that Thomas is being optimistic and suggesting that it is possible for each of us, in small ways as well as grandiose ways, to be a positive force in shaping the type of world we live in and the type of world we want future generations to inherit!"

"I agree," nodded another student. "And if we carry his hypothesis a step further, perhaps he's suggesting that the more we work together in collegial, ethical, and caring environments, the more likely these environments will be the inheritance that we leave for them to build on."

"But what about those people who enter our environments who simply are not lovable?" questioned Dr. Lane. "What about the parents who come in hostile and rude and don't respond to our overtures of congeniality? What traces of ourselves do we leave on them?"

The students became quiet for a few moments as they reflected on this dilemma. Finally, Lee broke the silence. "I believe we simply have to keep on seeking a way to reach them, because if we do not, we will have completely disavowed our premise that the schools belong to everyone. The parents must be convinced that we honestly care about their sons and daughters. Each time we let any individual leave with a bad feeling toward us, that feeling generalizes to the school. Then, the parents will proclaim that everything negative that happens in the student's experience is the school's fault."

"That may be true," Dr. Lane persisted as she walked across the front of the leadership lab. "But just how are you going to accomplish that goal?"

"I don't know," Lee responded truthfully. "But there must be a way, and I think the search is worth the time. That is a question I'll pose to the principal that I'm going to visit tomorrow."

Dr. Lane agreed that this concern was a real one and it was extremely appropriate to ask practicing principals how they handled such incidents. "It's important to remember that many of the hostile adults who enter the schools don't have happy memories of their experiences there. They often feel as though they must be confrontational or they won't be heard."

Related Passages

Dr. Lane paused as she opened a journal she had been holding. She introduced the passage she had chosen to read by saying, "Hal Lawson (1995), in an article written for the *Journal for a Just and Caring Education*, spoke of our need for wisdom and compassion in his discussion of child welfare reform." She began reading:

> A new vision for child welfare is in everyone's best interests. It requires both conceptual and behavioral shifts. For example, rather than blaming the victim, there is recognition that the systems and institutions serving children, youth and families need to be transformed. Instead of focusing only on individual children and youth and their presenting problems, needs and challenges need to be framed as family and community development issues. Rather than seeing children, youth and families as deficient, as clusters of needs and problems needing professionals' diagnoses and prescriptions, child, youth and family strengths need to be identified and emphasized. In lieu of having them as dependent clients, they need to be supported and empowered to act as partners with professionals in designing, implementing and evaluating strategies for enhancing their learning, development and well-being. . . . In lieu of creating and sustaining dependency on professionals, professionals can empower children, youth and families to act on their own behalf, helping others as they help themselves. Here the language of human rights is accompanied by dialogue about the responsibilities children, youth and families must assume. (p. 25)

This reading ended, Dr. Lane said, "This suggestion lies at the heart of authenticity in education whose major goal is not to create a society of needy individuals but to provide the type of support and training using all the resources of the community's ecological system to create strong, healthy, and productive citizens for the future."

Dr. Lane continued by citing two more passages. She began with Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund. Dr. Lane said, "She speaks of adult responsibility for children and youth in *The Measure of Our Success* (1992): 'It is the responsibility of every adult . . . to make sure that children hear what we have learned from the lessons of life and to hear over and over that we love them and that they are not alone.' Edelman further stated, 'Only we—individually and collectively—can transform our nation's priorities and assure its future as we face a new century and begin a new millennium' (p. 94). Cunningham and Gresso (1993) expand on this idea."

> Our present problems are not rooted in political or economic solutions. They are rooted in the full use of our humanity, and the full complement of human resources. Organizations must be designed in such ways that bring forth and orchestrate the culture to support a new order. Our organizations can no longer block and diminish the capacities of those ordinary professionals of which they are composed. . . . Organizational leadership will fail or succeed on the basis of how well the culture supports this new organizational order. . . . It is not the type of improvement that is externally mandated or centrally coordinated, but the type that grows out of the hearts and minds of millions of people putting in joint efforts to improve the education of their students. What becomes important in this grass roots process is the development of an ongoing culture that enables educators and schools to deal with whatever renewal efforts they want to pursue. (p. 275)

"With that, we end our discussion for the evening. As you make your site visit this week, be especially cognizant of the issue of school culture," Dr. Lane said.

Voices From the Field

Lee read additional literature suggested by Dr. Lane before he went to visit Lou Blevins, principal of Lake View Middle School (LVMS). When he arrived at the school, he took a few minutes to look around before he entered the building. He noticed that the windows were clean and shining and there was no debris on the ground or on the steps. The school had an inviting look to it, even though it was clearly an older building. As he entered the foyer, he observed banners, pictures, and trophies (athletic and academic) proudly displayed. Moving to the reception desk, he was greeted by a smiling receptionist who said, "Hello. Welcome to Lake View Middle School! Ms. Blevins will be with you in just a couple of minutes. She has been looking forward to your visit. May I get you a cup of coffee?" Lee declined and asked if it was all right for him to just look around a bit while waiting for Ms. Blevins. The receptionist asked him to sign the registration book and gave him a visitor's pass to wear while he was in the building. "You're welcome to look around, but we do ask that you not disturb the classes. We're hoping to have our school ranked as the number one school in the state this year!" The receptionist's enthusiasm was contagious. Lee found himself smiling as he moved down the hall and noticed as he peered through the glass in the doors how busy all of the students seemed to be. He was also struck by the fact that no two rooms seemed to be organized the same way. Small groups, large groups, dyads, individuals—everyone seemed busy, but there were no long rows of students copying notes from the chalkboard or overhead. There seemed to be an atmosphere of relaxation about the students and teachers but clearly "on-task" behavior was the norm rather than the exception.

As he returned to the reception area, a smiling woman met him with an outstretched hand, "Hello, Lee, welcome to Lake View Middle School, I have been looking forward to your visit. Dr. Lane is an old friend of mine, and I am always happy to meet with students who plan to enter the most rewarding profession in the world!" Lee marveled at this upbeat attitude. His positive impression of the school and its principal grew stronger as the interview progressed.

"Thank you for taking time to meet with me, Ms. Blevins. I know how busy you are and how much paperwork you have to complete every day."

"In my opinion, young man, the paperwork is the least important way I can spend my time. I have excellent help in the office and a number of young teachers, like yourself, who plan to go into school administration one day. As part of my mentoring program, I encourage them to help with the paperwork when they have some spare time. That allows them to learn the ropes and it frees me to do the number one thing I was hired to do. Do you know what that is?" Lee shook his head, unsure just how to respond. "Why, focus on the students and their families, young man! That is what authentic administrators do! I believe Dr. Lane said that you were interested in seeing for yourself how principals work. Well, I know not everyone agrees with me or approaches the job the way I do, but that's fine. There are many ways to be an authentic principal, so long as you keep your focus on the mission of the school.

"I think of the authentic principal as a principal who recognizes that everything that happens at school should enhance the learning of our students and better prepare them to meet the challenges of adulthood. That is our number one job.

"Sit down here and let me share some of my thoughts with you. I love to talk, read, and listen. I learn something new every day and I think that's critical for educational leaders. Of course, I include teachers, office staff, central office personnel, and everyone who works with our students in my definition of educational leaders. Have you ever read any of Lewis Thomas? He is one of my favorite authors. He says a lot of things that make sense in a school setting, even though he is a scientist. One of his quotes that I share with Lake View Middle School personnel goes like this, 'We leave traces of ourselves wherever we go, on whatever we touch' (1990, p. 167). Think about that, young man. It's not just meant for those at the top of the heap; it's meant for every single individual and is worth pondering before you make a rash judgment. That's not to say we won't make judgments that backfire. But by thinking about them, we will make fewer mistakes. And when judgments do go awry, we can try to make sure we don't repeat the same mistake again."

"Ms. Blevins, you have just hit on a point we were discussing in our seminar the other night. How do you deal with those parents, students, teachers, and so on who don't respond to your overtures of friendliness? Some people aren't as willing to work with you as they are to work against you."

"That is a very good question and a hard problem to deal with, Lee. Especially when you are just beginning as a school leader and perhaps have inherited a school where the priorities have not always been on the futures of all students. I believe it boils down to making sure that no one leaves our school feeling as though they are second-class citizens whose problems are not as important as someone else's. Everyone deserves respect at LVMS. It takes time to get everyone in the school to 'sing from the same page' but it is time well spent. If you take the time and energy to turn an unhappy parent, teacher, student, or whomever into an individual who feels understood and supported, you will have touched more lives in a positive manner than you could ever imagine! In addition, when you follow up with that individual in a few days with a friendly phone call or visit just to see how things are going, that person will soon become aware that you really mean what you say—that you walk your talk and you are authentic in your concern for all of the members of this community.

"Let me give you an example to illustrate this point. A number of years ago, when I was just beginning as principal at LVMS, there was a young mother of three small boys who simply could not seem to get the boys up and ready for the school bus in the morning. After talking with her numerous times, I decided the easiest way to deal with the problem was to get her an alarm clock and encourage her to set it in plenty of time for them to get up and catch the bus. Well, that idea did not work. She and the boys always had some sort of excuse as to why the clock was lost, not working, or some such thing. So, I stewed about this problem for a few days. You see, those boys were having to get up very early to meet the cross-town busing mandates and be here when school began at 7 a.m. Finally, it dawned on me that a very easy solution to the problem, which took all of about 30 seconds of my time, was to program my telephone with their telephone number. Each morning as I got up to get ready for school, I hit that button. When the mother or one of the boys answered, I said, in my loudest voice, 'Good morning! This is your wake-up call! It's going to be a great day today and I will see you at school at 7 a.m. Breakfast will be waiting for you!' "

"Now, in some ways, that seems to be going above and beyond what needs to be done. I am not saying that it is a solution for everyone, but it worked for this little family. Those boys stayed in school and graduated and now have jobs out in the community. One of them has gone on to the community college, and I would not be a bit surprised to see him running his own business one day. You know something else? Not only do I have a great sense of pride when I share that story, but it was a very positive way to start my own day. I knew I was making a difference for those boys and saving a lot of paperwork and counseling time and all of that other stuff that goes along with truancy problems.

"That's what it boils down to, consistent demonstration that you care about every individual connected to this school and their victories are your victories just as their sorrows are your sorrows. As caring and compassionate educators we must reconnect with the community and encourage our neighbors to recognize that all of us, including the children and youth, belong to this little Spaceship Earth. It is simply not acceptable that in a country so blessed with opportunities we provide so little for so many. Demographers predict that very soon our schools will be filled with students for whom poverty is a way of life. They will continue to come in ever-increasing numbers from homes that will not possess the basic necessities of life. We cannot afford to not meet the needs of these students who deserve to be educated and become responsible members of our society.

"In my opinion," Ms. Blevins went on to say, "There are five basic things that all young people need."

1. A healthy start in life through prenatal and infant care
2. At least one caring adult in their lives who can attest to their importance and provide the nurturing needed for survival
3. A safe school and a safe home where the emphasis is on a secure and stable environment
4. Skills that will allow them to blossom as individuals and gain the self-confidence to participate effectively and happily in the workplace
5. Opportunities to give back to the community the knowledge, caring, and skills they have acquired so that the cycle of "no throwaway kids" can be our number one accomplishment

"Students have found too few people to latch on to—people who show them kindness, warmth, and understanding. Schools must serve as bastions of caring and provide authentic school leaders who accept the responsibility of 'watchers of the gate.' Here, at Lake View Middle School, we have accepted that responsibility and together we are making a difference.

"When we pause to reflect on what caring entails, and we do that a great deal at LVMS, we realize that although it is a particularly important need in childhood, it is also one we never lose. We all thrive on the love, support, and caring that we receive from our families and friends, and when it is lacking for whatever reason, we can lose our self-confidence quickly, no matter what our age. I would like to share a personal story with you that I believe illustrates this point.

"One of the most memorable experiences I have ever had in relation to this fragility of our self-concept occurred when I was in high school and had the good fortune to travel to a nearby university to hear Robert Frost reading some of his poetry. He was quite elderly at that point and, being a reclusive individual in the first place, he seldom made public appearances.

"He had been reading many of his well-known poems and sharing some of the sources of inspiration for them when he announced that he was going to read a recently written poem not shared with anyone before that day. The auditorium we were in was not particularly large. It was a long, narrow gathering place with three sections of seats separated by two aisles. Just as Frost began to read his new poem, a young man on the second row on the left side of the room rose up from his seat and walked the long length of the aisle and out the back door. I will never know what important event he felt he had to attend to at that particular moment, nor will I ever forget Frost's reaction. He stopped reading as soon as the young man rose and watched as he walked out of the auditorium. Once the young man had closed the back door of the room, Frost picked up the sheets of paper, crumpled them into a ball, and tossed them to the floor. As the audience sat there in stunned silence, Frost mumbled so quietly that we could barely hear his words, 'He was probably right; it most likely wasn't worth hearing.' He read a few more well-known poems and ended his presentation.

"The realization that someone with the stature of Robert Frost could have such a fragile ego has provided me with both courage and despair throughout my life. Courage when I feel vulnerable that I am not alone in having such feelings, and despair when I inadvertently contribute to the loss of self-esteem in someone else. At LVMS we make it a major goal every day to be vigilant in our interaction with others. I have shared this story with all of the faculty, staff, and students. I do not share this story to freeze us into immobility for fear of hurting someone but for us to be constantly aware of the impact we make on the lives of those around us. After a great deal of thought and reflection, LVMS chose this statement to be our motto."

TREAT EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING THE WAY YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"I would like to share one more story with you about the way we are attempting to make a difference in the lives of our students here at LVMS. We search for literature that the students can latch on to as having meaning for their lives. Elementary schools have had quite a bit of success with their various programs related to reading for pleasure. I happened on a new book recently by Clifton Taulbert (1997), titled *Eight Habits of the Heart*. I bought a copy and was so moved by its message that I got copies for all the teachers in our school to read to their students as a way to start the day on a positive note. Taulbert's book is about his growing up in a little town in Mississippi in the turbulent 1960s, when the civil rights movement was at a crucial point. Taulbert is an African American whose community was primarily composed of white cotton-plantation owners. The setting had all of the attributes for a childhood filled with fear and anger and a young man who would grow up with the idea that there was not a great deal of hope for his future. Such was not the case with this little town of Glen Allen, however. The community had its share of bigots, but the memories Taulbert shares with us in his book are those that sustained him and his peers through the challenging times of their childhood and youth.

"He divided the book into eight habits practiced by the elders of Glen Allen that he believes made the difference between what he is today and what he might have become. Those eight habits are

1. Nurturing attitude
2. Dependability
3. Responsibility
4. Friendship
5. Brotherhood
6. High expectations
7. Courage
8. Hope

"At LVMS, the first 15 minutes of each day are spent with the teacher or perhaps a volunteer reading to the classes about the eight habits practiced by the citizens of Glen Allen to ensure the future was a bright one for all of their children. They did not allow skin color, religious beliefs, gender, or any other discriminator to stand in the way of supporting their children and youth.

"This book has been well received by the teachers, students, parents, and community. They are hearing the lessons that Taulbert is teaching in his gentle way—that all of us are responsible for what happens in our communities and that we need to care for one another.

"So, there you have it, young man! I believe this is what caring educators are all about. We have to provide an environment of trust and comfort where skill building and taking risks are safe. We have a wonderful opportunity to make a real difference with young people and adults. We must recognize that hope is believing in tomorrow because you feel in your heart that you are competent and worthwhile. How we respond when an individual shares dreams, sorrows, disappointments, or anger with us can have a lasting impact on that person's life. We can give them the courage to risk or we can squelch the spark of creativity and the individual will believe it was foolish to share an inner vision and withdraw into a shell of perceived inadequacy.

"You know, I have a couple of ways I cope with my own personal feelings of need or inadequacy. For one thing, I keep a journal. I may not write in it every single day, but at least three or four times a week, I will write down stories I have heard or read. I like to focus on the positive things that happen and that helps me to realize that I am accomplishing something, even if all I learned that day was an action that I do not want to repeat again! I seek out stories about and by people who have accomplished things no one ever believed they could because that is what I believe my role is: to help everyone in this school reach just a little bit higher today than they did yesterday and know that they can do it! I have a small group of peers who share a lot of my views on our roles in schools and we get together about once a month and talk about the way things are going. Most of these peers were members of my cohort when we were at the university, so we have many common experiences. We always come away from our little meetings feeling that we can and will succeed in making a difference because that is what brought us to this profession in the first place.

"Well, Lee, it's time for me to check things out again. I love walking the halls of this building and seeing good things happening and talking to those who need a little boost. Personally, I can't imagine having another job. I hope I have been of some help to you. Drop in again sometime. We're always glad to have visitors see what we are accomplishing!"

Journal Notes

1. Focus on the positive things and keep them happening.
2. Be vigilant in making your interactions with others caring.
3. Lasting improvement grows out of the hearts and minds of individuals' joint efforts.
4. Everything that happens in a school should enhance student learning.
5. Constantly demonstrate that you care about the victories as well as the sorrows of all individuals connected with the school.
6. Focus on the "eight habits of the heart":
    Nurturing attitude
    Dependability
    Responsibility
    Friendship
    Brotherhood
    High expectations
    Courage
    Hope

SKILL BUILDER 3.1
Emotional Issues Checklist

Create a Safe Environment.

1. Have you shared hope and optimism?
2. Did you communicate that this is manageable?
3. Is it clear that no one needs to be hurt?
4. Did you communicate a concern for everyone's success?
5. Have you established equality:
    - Put-downs are not allowed.
    - No punishments will be made.
    - All feelings are acceptable.
6. Did you communicate that all involved will survive?

Meet the Intrapersonal Needs of Others.

1. Did you communicate, "I care about you?"
2. Did you communicate, "I care about our relationship?"
3. Did you communicate, "I care about this organization?"
4. Did you communicate, "I want you to have some input in how this will be resolved?"

Join the Issue . . . Invite . . . Confront.

1. "We (not you) have a problem."
2. "Let's get started together."
3. Have you listened actively?
    - Do you know as much about the other person's position as your own?
    - What are the facts as you both see them?
    - What are the feelings surrounding the issue?
4. Have you separated fact from opinion?
5. Are you assuming or do you actually know the situation?
6. What are the vested interests involved?

SKILL BUILDER 3.2
Practicing Taulbert's Eight Habits of the Heart

1. What I did today to show a nurturing attitude:
2. Today, I demonstrated dependability by:
3. Today, I demonstrated responsibility by:
4. Today, I demonstrated friendship by:
5. Today, I demonstrated brotherhood by:
6. Today, I demonstrated high expectations by:
7. Today, I demonstrated courage by:
8. Today, I demonstrated hope by:

4

Trusting Self and Others

> *Trust is the highest form of human motivation. It brings out the best in people. But it takes time and patience, and it doesn't preclude the necessity to train and develop people so that their competency can rise to that level of trust.*
>
> —Stephen Covey (1989, p. 178)

When Lee entered the leadership lab for the fourth seminar, he noted that there was finally a quotation on the screen from a book that he had read. He recognized that the statements about trust had been taken from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey (1989). This was one of the two books by Covey listed as recommended reading for the class. At first, he was a bit skeptical about the choice of books. It appeared that there was a printing error in the title of the other book, *Principle Centered Leadership.* Wasn't "principal" spelled with "al"? In any case, this did not appear to be a real textbook. Nevertheless, Lee managed to read the entire book in a single session.

Dr. Lane began to speak: "As we move into a discussion of trust, we enter into a relatively new field of study for the principalship, developing trusting relationships in the school. It is critical to the success of principals, teachers, and students served by the school.

"Although some of the recent professional literature contains references to trust, a great deal of what we read about this topic comes from the popular literature. Covey talks a lot about trust in his book, *Principle Centered Leadership.* In the first part of the quotation on the screen, he says that in a climate of distrust, leaders must use control and coercion to manage. As you have gathered from the passages, this kind of work culture is neither productive nor fulfilling because energy is diverted from success behaviors to survival strategies. Covey gives us two ingredients essential to building trust: integrity and competence. Trustworthiness means if you make a promise you keep it. If you say you will do something, you do it. It means never being hypocritical or duplicitous. Covey warns that we cannot trust a person who lacks competence, regardless if that person has a high degree of integrity. People cannot be trusted to do what they have no ability to do. Therein, I think, lies one of the major reasons for mistrust in a school. When we are unsure of some person's ability to teach, we reconstruct evaluation systems to treat all teachers as if they were incompetent. The simple thing to do is hire people who are competent and ethical, know how to do their job, and have a value system that means they will do it. Then just get out of their way and trust them to do it. However, there's more to it than that."

Dr. Lane gestured toward the screen and read aloud the second point made in the Covey (1989) message, "It takes time and patience, and it doesn't preclude the necessity to train and develop people so that their competence can rise to that level of trust" (p. 178).

When she paused for the students to consider this comment, Lee spoke up. "You know, Dr. Lane, I believe the truth of the matter is that we are not patient people. We don't invest our time or our resources in people. I know that the amount of money allocated for staff development by most school systems is incredibly small. No matter how careful the hiring practices, all professionals need continuing support and training if they are to be competent and remain current. But it seems to me, as I read Covey, that he thinks we should treat individuals as if they are competent prior to their becoming so. I'm not sure if I read him correctly."

"You are exactly right, Lee, that is what Covey said," Dr. Lane replied. "And it may be very hard to do, but consider the alternative.

Communicating mistrust and the expectation of low performance will undoubtedly result in low performance. At least, by behaving in a trusting manner toward all, a principal can help most teachers achieve competence."

Another student spoke up. "I think Covey's reference to the 'emotional bank account' is of particular importance for new principals. He made it clear that it is important to establish trusting relationships and acquire some deposits in your emotional bank account from a faculty and staff before you can make a withdrawal from that account. The example of a new principal coming in and making massive changes without knowledge of the school culture, norms, and mores was a classic case of how to mess up almost before you've begun!"

"That is exactly the point that he wanted you to get from that story. You need to know the lay of the land before you start making any changes. A new principal has plenty to do just to get familiar with the current status of the situation. Needed changes can come after the trust quotient is high enough for everyone to feel that the changes are equitable and in the best interests of the students."

"But is there a way change can occur without all of the negativism generated by fear?" one of the other students asked.

"Absolutely!" replied Dr. Lane. "I know one high school principal who has virtually eliminated all fear of change by ensuring that it is the teachers who initiate the curriculum changes. He does this largely by keeping them heavily involved in learning about what's new and innovative in education. They attend seminars, visit other schools, engage in study groups, and talk to teachers all over the country via the Internet. He guides, asks questions, supports, secures resources, and helps provide direction, but they have ownership of the changes. Fear has been replaced by pride and excitement. The school is now a construction site for a large number of innovative programs; therefore, the trust level stays high. As a matter of fact, the people who visit the programs at this school consistently remark on the high degree of professionalism and cooperation that they see there. The principal has used trust, along with the 'power tools' of kindness and gentleness, to build a school culture that encourages the best from all.

"As you conduct your interviews this week, listen to how principals talk to you about trust. Determine whether they are people you would trust. Also determine whether they are people who trust others. It has been my experience that these two conditions go hand in hand. We don't trust people who are themselves untrusting."

Related Passages

As the cohort began its discussion of other related passages concerning the question of trusting self and others, one of the students spoke up: "I was particularly impressed by the readings we did in the Drucker Foundation's new book, *The Drucker Foundation: The Leader of the Future* (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Beckhard, 1996). In one of the essays, Judith M. Bardwick talked about the relationship between integrity and trust."

> Without integrity, trust is never achieved. The best leaders are transparent: they do what they say; they "walk the talk". . . . Having integrity requires truthfulness with oneself as well as with others in terms of what is genuinely valued and what is considered important. The best leaders don't waste other people's brains. . . . They have a core sense of confidence that allows them to be comfortable receiving input, including disagreement, from others.
>
> Today, individuals at all levels of an organization have experience, knowledge, and skills that they could bring to the table if their leaders were psychologically able to "hear." Hearing others, like empowering others, isn't a matter of process. It is, instead, a matter of respect. (pp. 136-137)

"I thought she captured the qualities that we have been discussing through our seminars and I found it very uplifting. Sometimes, we feel as though we are lone voices in the wilderness, believing future needs to be nurturance, support, and trust when many of our peers in other professions are so competitive. My eyes and ears are being opened to the fact that we are certainly not alone in our focus on the 'quality' aspects of leadership as being the most important discriminators and that is very comforting."

Lee spoke up at this point. "I found the reading from Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1985) to be helpful in putting this in perspective. They pointed out four principles that are important to keep in mind when it comes to public relations and the art of persuasion."

> 1. *Identification Principle.* Most people will ignore an idea or a point of view unless they see that it affects their personal fears, desires or aspirations.
> 2. *Action Principle.* People seldom buy ideas separated from action—either action taken by the sponsor of the idea or action that the people themselves can conveniently take to prove the merit of the idea.
> 3. *Principle of Familiarity and Trust.* We buy ideas only from those we trust; we are influenced by, or adopt, only those opinions or points of view put forward by individuals, corporations, or institutions that we regard as credible.
> 4. *Clarity Principle.* The situation must be clear to us, not confusing. The thing we observe, read, see, or hear, the thing that produces our impressions, must be clear, not subject to several interpretations. To communicate one must employ words, symbols, or stereotypes that the receiver comprehends and responds to. (pp. 178-179)

"I enjoyed the James Lewis, Jr. (1996) book about transforming schools," another student mentioned. "He was particularly persuasive when he talked about team building at the school level. As a principal, I would really want the school faculty and staff to think of themselves as part of a team with common goals and aspirations." Lewis lists the following benefits associated with team participation as the most important:

> 1. Team members are able to deal more effectively with authority and leadership; they know where decisions come from, which in turn enhances their acceptance of them.
> 2. Multiple heads are better than one. When teaming is accomplished effectively there is synergy. The wisdom, knowledge,

talents, interests, and information of the team is greater than the sum of its parts.

3. By participating in team synergy, it is possible to experience a new kind of satisfaction of individual effort, the achievement of group goals, as well as individual goals.
4. Decisions arrived at on a consensus basis by teams are more likely to be carried out without being sabotaged or changed much.
5. Teaming provides a basis for individual members to support each other through acquiring trust, caring relationships, intimacy, and sharing power as problems and issues are being worked through. (pp. 276-277)

"Anne Lewis (1997) wrote an article about professional development for teachers in the *Harvard Education Letter,*" said another student. Lewis lists several organizing principles for successful developments of this type:

1. The focus is on systemic improvement.
2. Good ideas come from talented people working together.
3. Collegiality, caring and respect are important.

> For such projects to be successful a culture must be fostered in which people cultivate a deep personal and professional respect and caring for each other. . . . Without collegiality on this level, you can't generate the level of enthusiasm, energy, and commitment needed. . . . Deep and sustained change requires that people feel a personal commitment to each other. (p. 6)

Dr. Lane smiled as the students paused to reflect on their readings and conversations. "I am pleased that you found so many different passages that had special meaning for each of you. The common denominator among all of the readings, however, was the self-confidence to risk, to trust yourself to make good decisions and to trust others to do the same. Of course, we will make mistakes, but there are many ways to rectify mistakes without losing our self-confidence. One important way is to know that the school is a supportive team of people who focus on the vision of the best they can bring to the table for all students and their families. You have captured that idea beautifully. I hope you have interesting and illuminating visits in the field this week. See you next week!" With that positive note, the session ended.

Voices From the Field

For this week's field assignment, Lee traveled to a small vocational-technical school that served as a center for six equally small rural high schools. The school had been created several years earlier during an era when the approach to vocational-technical education was to offer specialized job training for students preparing to enter the work force directly out of high school. Given that few rural systems could afford the equipment required for a full range of technical courses, systems were encouraged by generous state grants to enter into cooperative arrangements to share cost and governance of a center to which students were bused from their home campuses.

The principal of this school was a woman who had recently completed her dissertation on the subject of developing trusting relationships in schools. Wilma McCoy had served as a business education teacher in schools for 14 years before moving into the principal's position. Her observations on how important trust was to the success of her school were the primary reason why she chose that as her dissertation topic. Lee was pleased that he was one of the cohort members with whom she would be talking, for he considered her to be very knowledgeable on the subject. He began by asking her how she went about collecting information on a subject like trust.

Dr. McCoy responded, "Well, as with most research in education, I began with a survey. I used a questionnaire with a Likert scale to get a 'trust quotient' for each of the schools in the study. However, my dissertation chair suggested that I also ask five open-ended questions and invite respondents to tell their own stories about trust. I was able to include several of the comments made by teachers and principals in my dissertation.

"I know that most principals don't include dissertations in their pleasure reading, so my readership is very limited. But some of the stories that came to me need to be heard by principals, for they clearly illustrate the damage done to themselves, to teachers, and ultimately to students when the school climate is marred by distrust."

"What kinds of stories are you talking about?" Lee asked.

"As one example, I'll tell you about the teacher who wrote, 'I wonder what it would be like to come to work each day and be treated like a professional. The principal is constantly on somebody's back accusing them of some breach of conduct. The poor custodian, in this instance, the most politically powerless person on staff, seems to get the brunt of his wrath. He's so accustomed to getting a daily tirade that he comes in to the office around 8:15 every morning just to go ahead and get it over with for the day!'

"Another interesting aspect of my research is the number of stories regarding mistrust that came from a single school. I had told the people in my sample that no attempt would be made to identify individual respondents, but it was necessary to my research design to know from which schools the responses came. I noted that a teacher from the same school that I just described mentioned that she could not trust her principal because he did not trust himself. There is such a tragic waste of potential in that sort of environment, but I truly believe that unless there is a compelling reason not to trust, we should be trusting. I am sure you've seen the bumper sticker a lot of teachers have on their cars that says, 'If you think education is expensive, consider the cost of ignorance.' I think the same thing can be said of trust and mistrust. There's no question that it's difficult to trust others. Every day, people disappoint us, but every day people surprise us and wonderful things happen. Trust can cost us a lot of heartache when things go wrong but mistrust is a sure disaster.

"Nonetheless, as important as it is to trust, I know that there are some people and some times when you simply cannot exhibit trust. One of the individuals that I interviewed when writing my dissertation addressed that question. She identified herself as a school counselor and cited a book that she had read recently about trust. This respondent stressed the necessity of differentiating between trust and stupidity. She said we should stop trying to make ourselves trust someone whom our instincts tell us not to trust. She wrote that she has concluded that the first tenet of trust is trusting ourselves to make wise decisions about in whom and when to place our faith. There are no guarantees on human behavior. But we can trust people to be who they are. I try to take that advice seriously, and to trust people to be themselves. I suppose the hard part is figuring out whom to trust. She suggested that we can learn to see people clearly and figure out if people's words match their behavior. Is what they say the same as what they do? If we learn to pay attention to those soft voices in our subconscious, to trust our intuition, and to trust the messages we get from the world, then we'll know when and why to trust a particular person. If we do this often enough, we will discover that we've always known whom to trust, we just weren't listening to ourselves."

McCoy continued, "I've lived my life based on the belief that most people are basically good and want to do what is right. I believe that most teachers want to do a good job. Whether this is true or not, I prefer to do business based on this belief. I know that the most good can be accomplished by treating a good teacher in ways that communicate my trust and respect. I venture to say that more good will be accomplished in treating the few who may be less worthy of trust this way as well. There's a good chance that they'll rise to the expectation. And there's also the possibility that a school culture based on mutual trust and respect will in turn produce trustworthy teachers. In any case, it's a far better investment of time and energy to base our actions on the belief that people are basically good and wait until they prove themselves otherwise before responding in a distrustful manner."

"What about trusting principals? Were there any of them in your findings?"

"Oh, yes, there were many trusting principals. One common response was that principals who trust have better relationships with their faculties and therefore accomplish more. The mark of a good leader is one who is able to bring out the best in others. My first principal was this kind of person, and I guess I was naive enough to think all principals were that way. He was the kind of leader who brought more out of you than you thought you were capable of giving. Just knowing that he believed in you was motivation enough to do your very best each and every day. Whenever a teacher had a problem, he would approach the situation by saying, 'Well, we've got a problem here. What are we going to do to solve it?' We always knew that he was there to help us solve it, yet he always let us retain ownership of the problem. Doing otherwise would have sent the message that he lacked confidence in our ability to resolve our own problems."

Lee smiled, "So you concluded that most people in schools have a good deal of trust in their personal relationships?"

"Generally speaking, the answer to your question is yes," Dr. McCoy replied. "But I found that there are different kinds of trust that have to exist in a school. One type is basically what we call integrity. Teachers want principals who do what they say they're going to do. I think that some degree of predictability is essential for trust to flourish. For the most part, teachers want to know how the principal will behave given any set of circumstances. They want a principal who can be trusted to be honest with them. When they're doing a good job, they like to have someone tell them so. But they want praise to be genuine and sincere. Most people devalue a person's praise when they know that it's the principal trying to be Dr. Feel Good. False praise actually destroys self-esteem. A kind word goes a long way, and authentic principals speak those every day. But they don't rely on the hierarchical equivalent of happy face stickers and lollipops to tell teachers that they're doing a good job.

"In this school, I believe the people can trust me to do as I say and to say as I do. I think they call that walking the talk and talking the walk. The people here know that what I say, I do. They know that they can trust me to give them credit for their own successes. We are all in this together and our joint ownership of what happens in this school is of critical importance to our success."

Lee thanked Dr. McCoy for her time and left thinking that she was indeed an authentic principal in whom teachers could trust.

Journal Notes

1. Trust is the highest form of human motivation.
2. Without integrity, trust is never achieved.
3. The best leaders don't waste other people's brains.
4. We "buy" ideas only from those we trust.
5. Good ideas come from talented people working together.

SKILL BUILDER 4.1
Trusting Self and Others Self-Assessment

1. I indicate my trust in the abilities of the members of the school faculty and staff. yes no seldom
2. I indicate my trust in the members of the school community to provide support and help when needed. yes no seldom
3. I am able to discern the skills and needs of others in order to help them grow in their abilities to meet the school vision. yes no seldom
4. I trust my ability to make good decisions about the faculty, staff, and students. yes no seldom
5. I trust my understanding of the vision of the school and am able to communicate that understanding to others. yes no seldom
6. I trust others to help with tasks in such a way that we do not have misunderstandings about who is responsible for which aspects of the tasks. yes no seldom
7. I do not expect myself or others to give up other aspects of their life—family, hobbies, leisure, spiritual, and physical well-being—to meet school needs. yes no seldom
8. I respect confidences that others share with me and do not betray their trust. yes no seldom
9. I care about the success of all members of the school family and encourage them to take risks that will help them grow. yes no seldom
10. I do not assign blame for things that go wrong. I work with those involved to remedy the situation and do not let problems escalate into crisis situations for them or me. yes no seldom

Circle the answer that best describes your response.
Reflect on your answers—authentic principals exhibit a high level of trust.

5

Empowering All Constituents

The purpose of education is to enable a person to come into possession of all his powers.

—John Dewey

Lee read with interest the quote from John Dewey that Dr. Lane had placed on the screen. It seemed a fitting thought with which to begin a discussion of empowerment.

However, he was a bit confused about the direction the evening's discussion might take. This quote sounded as if the discussion would be focused on student power rather than teacher power. But wasn't empowerment supposed to be about the redistribution of administrative power to increase teachers' involvement in decision making?

Dr. Lane called the attention of the cohort to the screen: "I chose the John Dewey quote from your readings this week for a purpose. I want us to focus on the idea of generating power—enough power so that all people can take charge of their lives. Authentic principals are very aware of this simple axiom and recognize that sharing and generating power creates a culture of learners that can be one of the most exciting enterprises in the world. Powerful teachers can develop powerful learners, and our world needs the power of young minds creatively at work. Schools are about learning, and knowledge is power for all. Authentic principals are learners, as are authentic teachers—both become more powerful as they find new ways to light that creative spark in a student. Tonight, we are going to discuss empowerment from a number of perspectives: the empowerment of both teachers and students.

"Every educator, student, parent, and member of the community should support the view that education is a work of passion and needs to be viewed as one of the most significant parts of an individual's life. Learning does not begin, nor does it end, at the schoolhouse door. Nonetheless, it is within the walls of the schoolhouse that educators have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of all who enter. A passionate commitment to make a positive difference in the lives of students can become the major difference between a successful versus an unsuccessful school. Let's begin our discussion tonight with a focus on teacher empowerment. What does that phrase mean to you?"

Related Passages

One of the students spoke up. "I always thought teacher empowerment had more to do with the decision making that goes on at the school level so far as the resources are concerned. What you have just said does not seem to deal with that aspect of empowerment." Several students nodded in agreement.

Lee, who had been extremely quiet up to this point said, "It seems to me that the resources and who divvies them up is just a means to an end rather than an end in itself. I believe teacher empowerment has more to do with freedom to teach and try new methods to best meet the needs of students without fear of reprisal."

"That's exactly what I believe our passages this week were saying," agreed another student. "The authentic principal is an enabler, one who encourages innovation and supports a culture of collegiality."

"I agree," said Dr. Lane. "With the exponential growth of information that is occurring in our world, there should be a corresponding growth in the way we seek, learn, and retain pieces of meaningful information. Encouraging the members of the school community to accept the freedom to learn in heretofore unknown ways needs to be recognized as a natural companion to the rampant changes our world is experiencing.

"Authentic principals begin by encouraging the professional faculty in our schools to engage in *risk taking*. This empowers them to act in the best interest of each student with whom they are spending the precious time commodity of childhood and adolescence. With risk taking comes the responsibility of making good decisions, but acknowledging a poor decision as only one of a myriad of options allows the risk taker to realize it is OK to 'color outside the lines.'"

"I enjoyed the reading from *Principle Centered Leadership* by Covey (1990)," commented a student. "Although he stated that principle-centered leadership is a rare commodity, it seems to me that everything we have been talking about with the skills and behaviors of authentic principals relates to the fact that they are committed to their principles above all else, including support for all individuals through empowerment."

"I was impressed by the dimensions of behaviors that Short and Greer (1995) spoke of as indicators of teacher empowerment," said another student. The student summarized the five major areas discussed by Short and Greer:

1. *Decision Making*—Teachers are involved in critical decisions directly affecting their work.
2. *Professional Growth*—Teachers believe that the school in which they work provides them with opportunities to grow and develop professionally, to learn continuously, and to expand their own skills through the work life of the school.
3. *Self-Efficacy*—Teachers perceive that they have the skills and ability to help students learn, are competent, and can effect changes in student learning.
4. *Autonomy*—Teachers believe that they can control certain aspects of their work life.
5. *Impact*—Teachers perceive that they have an effect and influence on the school life.

Another student said, "I was also impressed by the list of characteristics of empowering schools that Larson and LaFasto (1993) pointed out."

1. A clear, elevating goal
2. A results-driven structure
3. Competent members
4. A unified commitment
5. A collaborative climate
6. Standards of excellence
7. External support and recognition
8. Principled leadership

"That list seems to combine a number of the main points of the passages that we read."

"I agree," said Dr. Lane. "However, there are a couple of points from the reading you did of Covey's book that I would like for you to reflect on. He states that a principle-centered school is one that operates from an idea of win-win. This is clearly a goal predicated on the expectation of success for all members of the learning community. He also speaks of 'empowerment as self-management.' This condition is based on trusting relationships. In the school setting, this means that the principal trusts the teacher to do a good job and the teacher trusts the principal to support that level of self-management. Teachers who are self-managed are critical thinkers, always questioning how they can improve through goal setting and reflection.

"Even though self-management is encouraged in a principle-centered school, helpful structures and systems must be provided. It is the responsibility of the principal to support teachers with resources and with feedback. And, because all are accountable, the principal must guide and support teachers in the process of self-evaluation. This leads us to conditions that Covey says are essential in this process—skills and character. He defines skill as something you can do, and character as what you are. Among the character traits he says are required for empowerment are integrity, maturity, and what he calls an 'abundance mentality.' This mentality is based on the belief that the more you share the more you have. Principals share their power with teachers and, as a result, better decisions are made and more is accomplished for students.

"Now, let's discuss the idea of student empowerment. What do you think student empowerment means in a school that is led by an authentic principal?"

Lee spoke up eagerly: "The most important thing that I realized as I was reading and reflecting on the terms for tonight's discussion is that an authentic principal and the empowered teachers in such a school recognize that students do not come to school as empty vessels to be filled with a lot of seemingly unrelated facts. In actuality, they arrive at school with a great deal of learning that has already taken place in their lives. If you stop to think about it, you realize that they have learned to walk, talk, eat, play, and survive prior to ever coming to a school. Since the students each come from a different setting, they have a set of expectations about what school offers based on many experiences, their own as well as those of the other members of their family and community. As the students progress through the years of schooling prior to attending high school, they form many ideas about the role of school in their lives. For some, it is exciting and challenging, but for others it is an endurance contest. Principle-centered schools such as Covey spoke of need to find ways to make sure that all students feel they are in a win-win situation. So, I would say that student empowerment means that students feel free to say, 'I don't understand what you are saying, can we try another way?' Once students can feel that it is their right and responsibility to help us find ways for them to learn what they need to learn as individuals, then teaching and learning will become much more rewarding for everyone involved."

"I agree," another student added when Lee paused. "I was particularly impressed by what Daniel Burke (1997) proposed as the elements essential for a student-centered school."

1. Every decision will be made solely on the basis of how and to what extent it will positively influence student learning.
2. Cooperative learning models will be found in abundance.
3. Promoting positive student self-concepts will be a major institutional theme.
4. Theme-based, interdisciplinary teaching will be the norm.

5. Students and staff will feel they are valued members of a caring community.
6. Long-term student-teacher relationships will be established.
7. Students will be grouped into nongraded classroom teams.
8. Teachers will be allowed to have adequate time for professional development and planning to meet the needs of individual students.
9. The focus of the school is to make decisions that will be in the best interest of the individual students for their present and future needs.
10. Involvement of members of the extended school family—support staff, central office staff, parents, business leaders, community agencies, and other volunteers—will be encouraged and suggestions for help and support will be actively sought and nourished.

"Burke concludes by stating, 'Student centeredness is inherent within the nucleus of education. By reforming our schools through coordinated organizational mosaics composed of the best programs and instructional models we now have, education can produce successful, optimistic students in nurturing, student-centered schools' (p. 26)."

A special education teacher in the class commented, "I realize that the addition of so many students in our schools who possess very special needs creates great challenges for educators. We must remember that all of these students have to cope with their 'specialness' for all of their lives. If you stop and think about it, our schools are presently the least diverse they will ever be. With the influx of students with varied needs into our schools, I am reminded of the wonderful Milne (1926) stories about Winnie the Pooh and the 100-acre woods. Remember when Kanga and Roo came to the forest? Immediately, Rabbit decided that he didn't like them, because they were different. He began thinking of a way to make them leave. Fortunately for everyone, his plan failed, as such clever plans so often do. In Rabbit's case, his opinion changed as a result of recognizing a hastily made judgment. The thing that makes someone truly different—unique, in fact—is something mechanistic thinking cannot really understand. In our profession, we must find ways to work together and create a welcoming environment for every student who enters our school."

"That is an important point," said another of the students. "If, as we profess, we are going to be authentic principals who will provide a welcoming environment to all who come to our school, we cannot select who is welcome and who is not!"

"Did any of your reading passages this week address this topic?" asked the Guide.

"Actually, there was an article by Michael Giangreco (1996) that addressed this very idea," responded another student. "He was suggesting that teachers view the school as a culture in which students, teachers, and everyone in the school work and learn together through cooperative enterprises." The student described how she had revised his five suggestions for teachers by adding to them some ways the authentic principal can make this happen:

1. *Get a little help from your friends.* Don't pretend you know what to do when a new situation comes along. Many seemingly overwhelming challenges have simple solutions when we ask the person who knows what should be done.
2. *Make every student feel welcome in the school.* No matter how different a student may be, the student has more in common with his or her peers than differences. Make sure the students are aware of the special skills of all students and see to it that all students are included in all class activities.
3. *Be the teacher and principal of all your students.* Even though a special teacher or support person is there to help with the complex needs an individual student may have, the student sees you as his or her teacher or principal. Do not let the student feel as though the differences are so great that being a full partner in the school is not an option.
4. *Clarify shared expectations with team members.* The need to know who is in charge of what, when, where, and with whom can easily be decided ahead of time. This will avoid any chance of embarrassing the students and will make for a much smoother running setting.

5. *Be certain that activities and lessons are adapted to meet individual student needs.* Although different learning outcomes may be expected from some of the students, it is important to make sure that all students feel they are in school where they belong and are learning new skills every day.

Dr. Lane smiled as the active discussion slowed down. "You certainly have strong feelings about the issues related to empowerment. What I have heard you express tonight suggests that you believe the role of the authentic principal in creating better schools is to be the leader in risk taking for the teachers, students, and any member of the school family. An authentic principal must focus on the students we have in our schools now. Everyone's efforts must be centered on how each student learns best and how we can collaboratively deliver the best learning environment." The students nodded in agreement.

"There is one other point that I would like to make in relation to the authentic principal's use of empowerment. The principal must also be a nurturer of the community's involvement in and support of the school. Through a shared vision and a trusting and collegial culture, the students and faculty alike should gain from the input of the current and future leaders and employers of the community.

"Encouraging school service learning opportunities for students to participate in community activities in a variety of volunteer roles produces a linking pin for students. They begin to recognize that they have skills that are useful to the larger community from a very early age. Likewise, the encouragement and support of businesses, community agencies, parents and other volunteers can create a symbiotic relationship between the school and the community that represents the highest ideals of caring individuals. The authentic principal who has the courage and the skill to bring this type of community to fruition is a leader of leaders. This type of leader realizes that progress begins with the idea that progress is possible no matter where the school is located. Optimism and trust do not wait on facts and verification; they deal in possibilities and are characteristics that distinguish authentic school leaders.

"I hope you have an opportunity to ask about some of the ideas we discussed when you do your field interviews this week." On that note, the session ended.

Voices From the Field

Lee chose Beverly Calloway to interview concerning the concept of empowerment. She came highly recommended for modeling participatory decision making in all of her administrative work. As the principal of a large middle school, she has three assistants. They are each responsible for one of the three grades, which are housed in separate buildings. Ms. Calloway is a well-respected principal, having been honored by her peers with numerous awards for her outstanding service. Lee decided he first needed to find out whether she was an authentic principal who was true to the idea of empowering others.

"Ms. Calloway, I am particularly interested in the way you handle the concept of teacher empowerment in your school. I have heard many positive things about the way you are able to turn all the members of the school into a family of leaders and learners."

Ms. Calloway's answer was quick and to the point. "First, I want to talk about my philosophy of school ownership. This is not my school—it belongs to all of us and to the larger community as well. This school belongs to everyone.

"At this school, teachers work in teams, and I have discovered, as have they, that there is extraordinary power in that. At parent-teacher conferences, for example, no teacher is left without support. All the teachers support each other and ultimately arrive at decisions that are best for the students' education. The team is certainly a stronger and more powerful approach to instruction as well. Teachers are better teachers when they plan, teach, and evaluate together. Teaching can be such a lonely profession, and the team approach gives professionals the support they need from each other.

"Another thing we've found to be very empowering is peer coaching. We started with a few volunteers who were trained using the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) peer coaching model (Hersey & Hersey, 1990). These few have become many, and now almost all our professional staff members are involved in some variation of the model. We've now gone a step further to include our student teaching interns and other preservice teachers. Our accomplished teachers serve as peer coaches for each other and as mentor coaches for interns, and we have recently begun having student teachers serve as peer coaches for each other and for students in the methods classes. All of the different variations of the mentoring and coaching model are based on a reflective approach to professional growth. As I say to our beginning teachers, 'There's only one person who will be in the classroom with you all day every day throughout your career, and you are that person. Each of us must learn to evaluate our own performance, and we also have a professional responsibility to help others evaluate their own performance.'

"Another thing we do at this school that I believe makes a strong statement for teacher empowerment occurs in the hiring process. Teams of teachers interview and make hiring recommendations not only for new teachers but also for whom we accept as student teachers. I am very pleased to say that, according to my criteria, they make very good decisions. They make choices based not only on competence but also on how the new person can contribute to the overall strength of the team and the entire school.

"We also practice site-based decision making here. Teachers, individually and collectively, are involved in decisions concerning hiring, curriculum, budgeting, and school policies. The school board has identified these as areas for participatory decision making and it's pretty much up to the principal and faculty to determine the specifics. In the beginning, the site-based team wanted to meet and discuss much more than they do now. Time is the most scare resource that any of us have, and these meetings take a lot of time. Now, we have about four meetings a year. Of course, there are many more frequent team meetings, and that's participatory decision making, too. There's rarely a day that the teachers and myself are not involved in some kind of group meeting that constitutes participatory decision making. Yes, it may take longer to reach a decision this way, but I think we have a better decision and certainly one that has stronger support among faculty and parents."

Lee interrupted to ask, "How are teachers chosen for the site-based team?"

Ms. Calloway responded, "Our school system adopted rules that essentially spell out how members are selected, and the teachers have the majority of the say in who serves. This school has been blessed by having a large number of teachers who are willing to assume leadership roles. I am aware that the professional literature is full of terms like *empowerment* these days. When schools use empowerment to create a struggle for governance, then everyone loses. At this school, we practice channeling the power that already exists—among all of us. Students have power; teachers have power; as do staff, parents, community—everyone has power. But the problem is how do we channel that power so that it's used for the greatest good?

"Let's talk about the phrase *stewardship delegation*. I think that phrase presents a wonderful alternative to the term empowerment. Why? Because if you view work in education as a service, and I do, then you've got the appropriate attitude with which to approach your work. Good principals have the wisdom to delegate tasks that can be done better by other individuals or by teams. The challenge is to understand the faculty well enough to know to whom you can delegate which task and to maintain a high degree of fairness in the process. We typically ask teachers at the beginning of the year to select three committees or three areas in which they would like to serve. We almost always manage to match each teacher up with at least one of those three areas. This approach, I suppose, is somewhat like that of the Parable of the Talents. People who do a good job are given the opportunities for greater responsibilities. I'm pleased with the leadership opportunities that teachers have had in their teams. We have had team leaders and assistant principals whose leadership skills have enabled some to move into principalships. I believe that the administrative position that I now hold is a stewardship role. The Board of Education and the Director of Schools have assigned me the responsibility of being a good steward of students, resources, faculty, materials, and time. A wise steward knows that the role he or she inhabits is that of neither owner nor master. The charge to the steward is to take what is given, manage it well, and return it to the master as a good return on the investment. We're hearing the term *value added* in our profession. Well, as I see it, that's what a good steward will do—add value to what's been delegated to him or her. If I could choose an epitaph for myself, I think that's what I would want to be said of me: She was a good steward."

Lee thanked Ms. Calloway for her time and thought-provoking comments.

Journal Notes

1. A principle-centered school is empowering and has a focus on creating win-win situations.
2. A school that believes in empowerment as its value system usually has an authentic principal as a leader.
3. Student centeredness is inherent in the nucleus of education.
4. Skill is something you can do; character is what you are.
5. Promoting positive self-concepts and excellence in teaching and learning are the cornerstones of an empowered school.

SKILL BUILDER 5.1

Individual Faculty Member's Analysis of Personal Strengths/Needs

1. The major skills I bring to our school faculty are:
2. I utilize my skills to enrich our school culture by:
3. Areas where I tend to be less successful are:
4. Areas where I would like to focus as a team member:

6

Excelling in Competence

Example is not the main thing in influencing others—it's the only thing.

—Albert Schweitzer

The evening's discussion had as its focus the idea of competence and it was clear as the students entered the seminar setting that they were eager for this discussion. Dr. Lane began, as she usually did, by first asking the students how they responded to the topic.

"I am so glad that we are discussing this aspect of the principal's role," said one of the students. "As we have discussed in previous sessions, all of us know educators, just as we know doctors, lawyers, and other professionals, who are simply going through the motions. They believe that the degrees hanging on the wall give testimony to their competence when in fact they have not stayed current with new information and are cheating not only themselves but those whom they are supposed to serve."

"I agree," said another of the students. "I believe we have definitely learned through our discussions that whatever one's job, competence is critical and nowhere is this more true than in education."

Dr. Lane smiled. "First, let it be said that authentic principals value competence in themselves and others. Both professional and support staff are selected for their competence. They are evaluated based on this, and professional development activities are provided for them to increase and enhance competence. Principals can greatly influence a school culture in which excellence is expected. Student success is celebrated, and faculty and staff are applauded for their achievements.

"With the move toward national standards, we're hearing the call for preparation programs and evaluation systems to be structured around the question, 'What should teachers know and be able to do?' In response to this call, the Interstate New Teachers Support Consortium has developed a set of expectations that are being used by teacher education institutions to restructure their initial licensure programs. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has developed a comparable process for evaluating accomplished teachers, and now they are earning national certification based on demonstrating their competencies.

"But what about principals and their competence? If the call is for every child to have a competent teacher, then it is equally imperative that every teacher and school have a competent principal. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) has attempted to address this question in its report, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. The commission has recommended substantial changes not only in the preparation of teachers but also in how principals organize schools for learning and for shared leadership. The report states that efforts to improve the quality of teachers cannot succeed without the support of school leaders and that, consequently, new standards are needed for the principalship."

Dr. Lane pointed out that the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium of the Council of Chief State School Officers has developed model standards, indicators, and assessments for use in principal licensure. These standards are structured around a view of the competent principal as one who believes that student learning is the purpose of the school and the primary focus of his or her work. In this kind of learning environment, she explained, the principal must also excel in competence.

Related Passages

"For a historical review of some of the areas in which principals must excel, we look back to the competencies identified by the National Association of Secondary School Principals," Dr. Lane continued. "NASSP used a list of proficiencies to structure a series of exercises designed to assess the skills of prospective principals in what is called an *assessment center.* Then, in 1992, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (Thomson, 1992) developed an expanded list of 20 leadership competencies considered essential tools for 21st-century leaders. Let's briefly review some of these requirements and the implications for you as prospective high school principals. Each remains an area in which principals must excel on a daily basis.

"The first of these is **Leadership,** a most appropriate choice for a list of leadership competencies, wouldn't you agree? Briefly, leadership means having a vision that takes others with you forward into the future. Leaders build the future with their beliefs, ideas, words, and actions. They're willing to try new ideas, take risks, and be the kind of paradigm pioneers our schools need so desperately.

"A second domain is that of **Information Collection.** Seldom can any administrator have all the facts available before making a decision. But if good decisions are to be made, the principal must have as many facts as possible. This also means knowing the rules and regulations as well as the policy and political influences applicable to a given situation. Of equal importance is knowing what the feelings are about that situation. Particularly on issues that represent a change in curriculum or school values, it's imperative that the attitudes of faculty, students, and community be considered.

"A third area is **Problem Analysis.** The hardest part of solving any problem is defining the problem. Every good administrator knows that in most situations there are two parallel issues at work: what's happening and what's really going on. The secret is to be able to look at the situation from several perspectives and weigh the relative pros and cons of the available solutions. And it's always important to remember there may be more than one solution to a problem. We are told that there are three sides to every issue: your side, their side, and the truth. It is important to study the environment around the problem, for in many cases the truth, the solution, points to itself. The authentic principal weighs these alternatives and uses good judgment in problem solving.

"That brings us to another dimension, **Judgment.** The official description of this term is about logic, timeliness, and the ability to prioritize. Equally important is something commonly referred to as intuition. The principal must feed and heed that small quiet voice that speaks softly to say, 'This is the *right* thing to do.'"

Following a brief break, the grad students returned to the leadership lab with their soft drinks and coffee. The next competency discussed was **Organizational Oversight.** "The authentic principal must be adept at organizing more than things, more than schedules, even more than people," said Dr. Lane. "Successful principals must be organizers of ideas, programs, and concepts.

"Serving as an assessor in a NASSP assessment center some years ago, I observed the work of a participant who scored extremely low on organizational ability. One of the people from her school system was present in the debriefing session and commented that this candidate would be devastated at such a low score since she considered herself to be extremely well organized. This discussion concluded with my own realization that organizational ability, like many other skills, has a taxonomy. At its lowest level is the organization of things. I am sure that this teacher had a perfectly organized classroom. Her desk drawers were no doubt neat, with paper clips, thumb tacks, and erasers all in their proper place. Perhaps, she even had well-organized students and instruction. Students moved from station to station; the day proceeded according to a firmly fixed schedule. Papers were graded and returned promptly. But at a higher level, ideas were disjointed and there was not any internal organization to her writing. In contrast, some of the most gifted organizers I have ever known worked in an environment marked by extreme physical disarray. The test cannot be based on the customary signs of organizational ability but rather on how effectively one manages the true work of teaching and learning.

"Two related competencies that we will consider next are **Measurement and Evaluation** and **Implementation.** Success in the principalship will be gauged by how much is actually accomplished. This requires the ability to identify needs and to evaluate success toward meeting those needs. Developing vision statements and planning innovative programs are important first steps to implementation, but the key here is having the energy and the commitment required to see a project through to completion.

"Another skill dimension for authentic principals is that of **Sensitivity,** however. I believe that persons can be trained to exhibit sensitive behaviors, and perhaps over time those behaviors will become internalized to the point that they are genuine and natural," Dr. Lane elaborated. "I say this to stress the difference between artificial and superficial behaviors and authentic sensitivity. The NASSP assessment center activities assess this domain by determining whether candidates responded to others when appropriate and with suitably sensitive language. Writing notes and letters of appreciation with frequent uses of 'please' and 'thank you' cannot be overly stressed. However, as with our discussion of body language, there is more to the message than these acts and words. Critical to the issue of sensitivity is word relationships. Without a trusting, positive relationship, the behaviors we associate with sensitivity will be rejected as dishonest and manipulative. To quote an old expression, 'You can't fake sincerity.' "

"Principals cannot succeed with one-dimensional interests. Becoming absorbed in the work of the school is a trap into which many fall. We talk, think, live, and breathe school. But if we are to effectively work with others, we must be interested in some of the things that interest them and that reveal ourselves as genuine people. But to promote a range of interests simply as a means to the end of enhancing our job performance misses the real reason we must expand our horizons. We are better, happier, and better fitted for service when we get outside the school walls and live life like real people. Playing, laughing, and having fun also serve as stress reducers. Laughter, while perhaps medicine for the soul, also tells much about us. We reveal ourselves in what we laugh about, the jokes we tell, the stories we recount. Especially in these days of political correctness, we must carefully consider what makes us laugh. Do we chuckle at jokes that make a member of a minority group the object of laughter? And what about jokes poking fun at blondes, women drivers, or persons with disabilities? I have concluded that there's only one safe subject about which to laugh: oneself. Fortunately, this is a subject with a never-ending supply of material, for every day brings new cause for laughter.

"As Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) point out, 'There is a simpler way to summon forth what is best about us. It asks us to understand human nature differently, more optimistically. It asks us to be less serious, yet more purposeful, about our work and our lives. It does not separate play from the nature of being' (p.5).

"The abilities to **Communicate Orally and in Writing** represent two additional dimensions. Written expression is regarded too lightly by some would-be administrators. Some assume, wrongly, that this is a skill of relatively little importance. More than one principal has been embarrassed by having a memo with a misspelled word or a grammatical error returned by a chiding teacher or an irate parent with an admonition to proofread more carefully. But routine correspondence aside, the ability to write well and be understood by one's constituents is vital to the principal's success in creating better schools. For there to be change, ideas must be communicated, thoughts must be recorded, plans must be put on paper. Principals who are adept at written communication are much better prepared for leadership than those who depend on others.

"Of equal importance is the basic skill of **Oral Communication.** Authentic principals are constantly engaged in talking: talking to students, staff, subordinates, parents, and community members. In these informal exchanges, care should be given to avoid slang, nontraditional English, and most certainly any form of profanity. As a superintendent, I once had to resolve a complaint from a parent who objected when an assistant principal returned her profanity with a few choice words of his own. She said, 'I know I'm a parent and a lady, and I shouldn't talk like that, but he's a teacher!' I do not question her claim of parenthood, though lady she was not. However, she was correct that professional educators should not use profanity. Educators should not resort to crude or profane language in school-related communication. What about outside the school? Suffice it to say that the habits permitted in one setting are not easily controlled in other times and places."

A student in the back of the lab interrupted. "How about nonverbal communication? Isn't that just as important for educators?" he asked.

"Yes. Voice tone, facial expressions, and body language all contribute to the message received by the listener," Dr. Lane replied. "Facial expressions and signals sent by other parts of the body account for more of the messages we send, as some of you already know, than do the words we say. Remember that body stances that are closed such as crossed arms or clenched fists communicate closed positions. Simply being conscious of one's posture is the first step toward controlling these messages. As a matter of habit, I recommend the practice of keeping hands open, relaxed, and still. The temptation to fidget can be effectively controlled by keeping pen and pad in hand to make notes during a conference.

"Our discussion of oral communication cannot be complete without a reference to the issue of noise. Although it is easy to see how the physical noise associated with the operation of a school can impede oral communication, silent noise may be even more powerful. One principle of communication theory is that our prejudices, beliefs, and experiences serve as a filter, screening out or warping messages that are contrary to our expectations. Ignore the propaganda and small talk; focus on what you see. Much of the conflict that occurs in human communication is a direct result of this silent noise."

"I'm sorry," Lee said. "What's a silent noise?"

"One of the most common is the power structure of the school," Dr. Lane explained. "In a boss/worker relationship, messages may be viewed as threats or orders that were intended simply as casual conversation. As a female administrator located on an organizational chart at a level above some male administrators, I sometimes found gender serving as a noise maker. Occasionally, the deference with which my male coworkers had been trained to treat women got in the way of our work. Prejudices, biases, emotions—all these can serve as noise.

"This discussion of communication skills connects to another skill dimension in which principals must be competent: **Public Relations.** For its support to be secured and maintained, the public must be constantly informed of the needs, problems, and successes of the school. Although few secondary schools can afford a paid, professional public relations expert, in one sense each already employs these people. Every faculty member and staff member is paid not only to perform a specific task but also to be a good ambassador for that school. One of the most important tasks of the authentic principal, then, is marshaling the resources in such a way that the best interests of the school are served.

"**Philosophical and Cultural Values** constitute still another skill dimension. Values can be observed, described, and analyzed. The authentic principal values education and believes that what happens in schools is critical to the success of the individual and survival of society. Furthermore, the authentic principal also believes in the worth and dignity of all people. Public schools do not exist for any one social group or for any one student group in the school. Authentic principals do not assign the 'best' teachers to the most academically gifted students while staffing vocational and special education classes with the less competent. All children are worthy of the very best teachers and resources that our society can provide them. I strongly believe that it is through the allocation of resources that principals most clearly communicate their values. Authentic principals work hard to ensure that competent people are employed in all faculty and staff positions (Ralston, 1991).

"Finally, authentic principals are **Reflective;** they learn from experience, and they are lifelong learners. That means learning to use the latest technology and maintaining an inquiring mind throughout a lifetime. These leaders must not only possess these competencies, they must excel in the demonstration of them. In your field interview, look for ways that principals demonstrate that they both possess and excel in these competencies. Next week, let's talk about the high flyers who are out there—the principals who are setting the bar higher and higher."

Voices From the Field

For his field assignment on the topic of competence, Lee arranged to interview a former high school principal. He had recently moved into a superintendent's position after having served several years as the system's director of personnel. Dr. Lane had suggested Russ Daniels as an appropriate resource because of his experience in the principalship as well as in other positions that required him to evaluate the competence of teachers and other staff members. Furthermore, the slogan for the school system, "Expect the Best," communicated the idea that competent performance for all was the norm.

Lee arrived for his interview a few minutes ahead of schedule. He certainly did not want to begin a discussion of competence by being late. Dr. Daniels was on schedule, so they began promptly. After the customary introductions and a few pleasantries, Lee asked, "How does a system this large ensure that all personnel are competent?"

"The task of selecting, developing, and evaluating personnel is perhaps the most important duty assigned to the principal. Deal and Peterson (1994) refer to this process as 'the gatekeeper role of the principal.' For several years, it was my job to interview and screen applicants for all positions. A system this size gets literally thousands of applications each year.

"We get so many applicants that we can't consider any others beyond those for whom we conduct a screening interview. Careful records are maintained and the Personnel Director assigns a score to each applicant based on the interview, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and other materials submitted for our consideration. We look closely at each applicant's transcript. We take seriously the competencies for teachers identified by the Interstate New Teacher Assistance and Support Consortium (1992) as well as the National Board for Professional Standards in Teaching (Shapiro, 1985). We want teachers who know their content. We encourage applicants to bring their portfolios to both the screening and any subsequent interview. Some choose to include videotapes of their teaching that we can review as a part of the selection process. After the interview, information about the applicant is entered into a database. When a vacancy occurs, we can identify a pool of appropriately credentialed people.

"A committee has carefully outlined the specific requirements for success in the position. Those competencies in addition to the kind of license needed are spelled out in the job announcement. The interview committee is typically composed of the principal of the school, two or three teachers, and sometimes a parent and a student representative. The principal may choose to be a direct part of the interview or may serve as an observer. The committee asks questions from a prepared list, taking great care to ask each candidate the same questions, and allowing the same amount of time for each interview. In short, we try to make the process as objective and as fair as possible."

"But how do you ensure that the candidate you choose actually does a good job?" Lee queried.

"Your question is certainly on target," responded Dr. Daniels. "Hiring, important as it is, is just the beginning. After we employ people, we spend a lot of time orienting them to the system and to the job itself. We try to make sure that the employee fully understands the expectations associated with the position."

"Do you have a mentoring program for new teachers?" Lee asked.

"Yes, in addition to the orientation process, we assign each new person a mentor. We provide formal training to both the mentors and the protégés, and we allow release time for this mentoring. Furthermore, the administrator who has supervisory responsibility for the teacher conducts both formal and informal observations and evaluations of the teacher. We may allow the teacher to attend seminars or visit other classes, either in or outside the system. We may also bring someone in as a peer coach, and, on occasion, we have hired a consultant when the needs have been specialized and complex.

"All this is done in a genuinely helping way, but everyone involved knows that the only result that can be accepted is competent performance. If the teacher is either incapable or unwilling to meet that expectation, employment must cease."

"What do you do about tenured teachers who are not performing competently?" Lee asked.

Dr. Daniels replied, "Therein lies our real problem. The vast majority of our veteran teachers are highly competent. But, as in any organization, a few do not perform up to standards. They usually are people who were hired and tenured before the requirements became so stringent. I suppose it's possible that they were competent at some point in time. They may have become complacent or burned out and the quality of their work has declined over the years. But from what I've seen, that's not normally the case. A lot of these teachers were incompetent from day one, and somebody failed to either help them improve or get them out of the system.

"Authentic principals value competence in themselves and will not settle for anything less in faculty and staff. Principals hire for competence, supervise to ensure and enhance it, and if necessary dismiss those who aren't competent. Authentic principals know what it takes to be an effective teacher and have a wide array of strategies to help their faculties attain this professional level. They know that the goal is to see every faculty member grow and to become more competent with time. Authentic principals have a value system that says every child deserves a good teacher, and they are strong and brave enough to make that happen. I would never hire a principal who had not first established a record as an outstanding teacher. Teachers do not respect, and do not judge as competent, a principal who has not proven to be a good teacher first.

"Getting back to the question of how a school system, or superintendent, can ensure competent performance from all, I think the only way that can be achieved is by having a school culture based on high expectations. Until that happens, there's little chance of attaining that level of competence. And if we can't ensure the competence of our administrators or our teachers, how can we expect it of our students? John Goodlad (1984) said, 'An organization runs on motivation, on conviction, on morale' (p. 17). He went on to say that people have to believe that what they do makes a difference, that the individual can and does make a difference. Some principals focus so much on all the problems that our schools are facing that they convince themselves that they're powerless to make that kind of difference. Consequently, they become complacent and their work is mediocre.

"We cannot tolerate mediocrity in our school system. I believe that if public schools are to survive, we've got to begin supporting authentic principals who 'think outside the box,' as they say. I consider risk taking to be the mark of an authentic principal. I am pleased to say that we have many principals who have the courage to take risks and possess the confidence in their faculty to encourage them to try new things. This is an attitude that should permeate the entire school system."

Journal Notes

1. Excellence is an attitude.
2. Competence can be recognized, developed, and evaluated.
3. You cannot fake sincerity.
4. Authentic principals develop a school culture where excellence is expected.
5. Authentic principals marshal their public relations resources in such a way that the best interests of the school are served.
6. Authentic principals value competence in themselves and will not settle for anything less in those who are faculty and staff.
7. An organization runs on motivation, conviction, and morale.
8. Authentic principals think "outside the box."

SKILL BUILDER 6.1
Force Field Analysis

Goal:

Enabling Forces	Barriers to Attainment	Remedies to Barriers

7

Sorting the Wheat From the Chaff

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them and, when you have them, they are not worth the search.

—William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

As the cohort members entered the seminar setting, they looked with anticipation at the quote Dr. Lane had placed on the overhead. "I know I have heard that quote, but for the life of me I don't know where!" That phrase and variations were heard around the table as students racked their memory banks for the source. Finally, one of the students, an English teacher, said: "I know where that came from. It's from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice!*"

The Guide smiled in agreement. "That is exactly right. Now, who can tell us what that has to do with being an authentic principal?"

"Perhaps it means that principals talk too much about things that are not important?" Lee suggested.

"No, I don't think that's it," interjected another student. "I think it means that principals often spend their time on things that seem important but turn out to be not important at all."

"I suspect that both of you are correct," responded Dr. Lane. "How does a principal decide to most appropriately spend his or her time?

"Think about it for a minute. On any given day, there are an infinite number of details that need to be dealt with. As an authentic, caring, and responsible leader, you want to be accessible to those who need you and yet complete your daily assignments. How are you going to do all of these things in addition to visiting classrooms and meeting with students, parents, teachers, and others who are involved in the day-to-day work of the school?"

The cohort members were silent as they thought about this dilemma. "You are right to give this some serious consideration," said Dr. Lane. "This is an important question for you to discuss with the principals with whom you are visiting and working. Ask them how they 'sort the wheat from the chaff.'

"It would be easy for any one of us to fall into Gratiano's trap. It is extremely difficult to ascertain if the problems presented to us are fires that need to be dealt with at once or merely a great deal of smoke. Thus, a key skill of an authentic principal is to know that the choices made in the finite amount of time allotted in each day are truly worth the expenditure.

"No doubt, every generation believes it is the first to deal with the numerous serious and overwhelming tasks that we face with greater rapidity every day. All of us can remember when our parents or grandparents pointed out that certain trends and behaviors of our generation were going to be the downfall of life as it ought to be."

As cohort members smiled and nodded in agreement, Dr. Lane continued, "We can generalize this common theme across generations as we find ourselves muttering similar statements as we watch the news, read the papers, or look at the stacks of stuff on our desks. However, it is this recognition of our commonality that can give us hope, if we choose, by realizing that we survived the generation gap and that the youth of today will also survive. One of the most important skills you can develop as you prepare to become educational leaders is to choose what requires your attention versus those tasks that are time wasters. Just as previous generations have struggled with this concept, so will those that succeed us. However, one axiom that you might want to place on your desk is as follows."

DO NOT REWARD YOURSELF FOR DOING THE WRONG THINGS WELL!

"It requires no special skill to remain busy as an administrator, teacher, student, or parent. The skill comes in choosing tasks that are relevant to the school's mission and deserve your attention. It is easy to fall into the trap of staying incredibly busy and feeling that you have accomplished a great deal on your 'to do' list on any particular day. Don't pat yourself on the back for doing things well that do not deserve your time. Placing orders for supplies can certainly be done by the secretary. The custodian can handle the agreed-on sequence of tasks he or she needs to accomplish each day. The librarian can see to it that books are ordered and examined appropriately. Department heads deserve the time and opportunity to work with the individual faculty members about the issues surrounding their departments. Routine tasks need to be handled by the principal only when something has occurred that is not in the norm of the usual procedures. Make sure that you take a critical look at the additional stack of tasks you have agreed to accomplish. You may find you have agreed to accept routine tasks that can best be done by someone closer to the situation."

Related Passages

"It is possible to deal with this leadership dilemma," Dr. Lane continued, "by using your sense of humor. Pretend that all of these peripheral needs and problems that come knocking on your door are monkeys! You usually start each day with a couple of monkeys on your shoulder that need to be cared for and sent on their way. If you allow each person who comes in your door or sends you a letter, e-mail, or phone call to hand you another monkey to care for, by the end of the day you are so covered with monkeys, you are completely lost!

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"So, how do we go about prioritizing which 'monkeys' deserve our finite amount of time? Senge (1990) points out that constant vigilance to the school's culture and mission must be the focal point of the daily work of successful school leaders. Just as busywork can be never ending, attention to the school vision can replace busywork. It becomes a reference point for the day-to-day workings of the school that will assist the principal with making decisions about the importance and relevance of the tasks that land on his or her desk.

"Tom Peters, in his 1994 book *The Pursuit of Wow!* highlights the tremendous power of personal engagement by the authentic leader: 'The benefits of personal engagement expand exponentially both for the nurtured and the nurturer. The quick phone call, the small courtesies, the warm words are all modest acts of engagement that make people feel good' (p. 6). Such feelings generalize to the larger setting and rather than reducing the amount of work that gets accomplished they increase everyone's production as a result of the experience. You will notice that you are feeding and caring for fewer and fewer monkeys as you encourage and support leadership on the part of those who seek your advice. Peters also suggests that ways to sort the wheat from the chaff include asking yourself questions about what you and those around you are doing in order to not let routines become time wasters."

1. Constantly question the ways "things are done around here" to make sure they are still appropriate for today's and tomorrow's world. (Just because it has always been done that way is not the correct answer.)
2. Exert constant vigilance to ensure the culture is one of mutual support. Keep politics as absent as is possible in a human (i.e., imperfect) enterprise. This is done by asking a lot of questions and listening closely to the answers.
3. Ensure that no question or innuendo ever surfaces about the ethics of the members of the school faculty and staff by monitoring carefully the actions taken in the name of the school.
4. Constantly remind yourself and everyone associated with the school that the proof of your work lies in the future but requires consistent quality input every single day.

5. Grow in the depth of what you do in your school—by remembering that quality is not measured by size but by excellence, longevity, and meaningfulness.

"Authentic principals, then, can examine their accomplishments from the standpoint of what they do each day to remove obstacles to success in creating meaningful learning experiences for the students of the school," Dr. Lane summarized.

Voices From the Field

As Lee prepared for his visit to Hillcrest High School, his thoughts were focused on the discussions the cohort had been having on time management. He smiled to himself as he thought about all of the monkeys that could jump on a principal's shoulder if the principal was not careful. He wondered how Julia Rosen, the Hillcrest High School principal, was going to respond to this aspect of the principal's role. He knew that she was a very energetic, dedicated, and highly successful leader whose school community was very supportive of her.

Ms. Rosen laughed out loud when Lee shared the monkey story with her once they had settled in her office for their discussion. "Dr. Lane shared that same story with my cohort when we were taking that class and, you know, it has been one of the most useful gifts I have ever received. Let me show you who has shared this office with me ever since I was appointed principal." She turned and placed a little stuffed monkey on her shoulder and said, "Drucker (named after Peter Drucker, the great time management guru) sits on my desk and I turn to him on a daily basis and reflect on whether or not he needs company when people bring me their monkeys! That does not mean that Drucker and I do not share the office with some of his relatives from time to time. However, Drucker and I usually can help the individuals wanting us to add to our menagerie. We briefly discuss what needs to be done and point out that they possess the skills necessary to care for their monkeys. Drucker really is an amazing helper! After a while, people will come in and say, 'I know this is my monkey and I won't leave it with you, but I would like to ask you and

Drucker to listen to my situation and give me your opinion as to whether or not I am on the right track!' Isn't that wonderful? Drucker has saved me many an hour doing things that rightfully should have been done by someone else and, by so doing, we have expanded the skills of those individuals who believed that the sole problem solver in a school was the principal. I certainly have a lot of situations that do require my attention, but I now have a lot of people in this school who can deal with many of the situations that arise and, as a result, everyone gains.

"Let me share some other coping mechanisms I use to deal with life in the high school. Like most of my peers in the cohort programs from the university, I keep a journal that encourages me to reflect on my decisions and the results. I also like to read everything I can that will help me be a better leader, and then I share these readings with members of the faculty. We have formed several volunteer discussion groups from time to time about particular books or articles one of us has located and wants to discuss in a more in-depth fashion. For example, I recently read a book by Basso and Klosek (1991) with the unsophisticated title, *This Job Should Be Fun!* The main thesis is that everyone should enjoy their life in the workplace and not just save pleasure for special occasions and time away from the job. This idea really struck home with me as I wondered how many of the individuals who spend their days at Hillcrest High School saved all of their 'fun time' until after school?

"Basso and Klosek interviewed over 2,000 managers and found that 741 of them, who were considered to be the most successful of the leaders in the study, were committed to one common idea: 'I care—You matter—This job should be fulfilling!' This attitude was present in the way they helped the members of their teams succeed and enjoy work at the same time.

"According to their study, these leaders had eight common traits that they used to 'lighten up the work environment.' Our discussion group and ultimately our entire faculty studied these traits carefully and made a pact as to how we would use them in our school setting. We wanted to make sure that teaching, a profession we all chose with such enthusiasm, remains an exciting adventure and that school remains a fulfilling place to find both success and joy. The list is dynamic and can be changed if we find that any of the characteristics are not bringing about the culture we are seeking to maintain. This is our list (based on Basso and Klosek as well as our own deliberations)."

1. *Refuse to Take Any News Tragically.* An important tool in the authentic principal's tool chest is to radiate hope in tough times. Although this may sound a bit Pollyannaish, it is a far better model than the "Woe is me" attitude (an incredibly contagious and often fatal disease for any organization).

2. *Erase All Negative Criticism.* Negative criticism can destroy the fabric of team collegiality in the blink of an eye. Discourage such immature behavior by your own example and honest praise for disagreements solved through discussion rather than accusations. When someone has made a mistake, discuss the behavior that led to the mistake and lead the individual or individuals in deciding how he or she can repair this mistake and avoid making similar ones in the future. This skill is one of the most important the authentic principal can demonstrate to maintain professionalism and fulfillment in the school setting. On the other hand, this is a skill that many faculty members possess and use to help their colleagues solve challenges without them ever reaching the principal's office.

3. *Specific Thank Yous.* Be specific in acknowledging a job well done. For example, "Thanks so much for all the extra time you put into the Science Fair. I know you had to give up a lot of family time to pull off such an outstanding program!" This statement clearly says that you care, that you really meant what you said.

4. *The Critical Beginning.* According to these successful leaders, the first half-hour at work is the most critical time of the day. That's when the conscious mind sets its mood for the rest of the day. Greet the teachers, the bus drivers, students, parents, custodians, everyone you see with a "Hello! How are you? We're going to have a great day today!" Use this tip and see if you don't agree with those who have used it so successfully.

5. There Is Always a Solution! Entirely too many leaders take themselves too seriously according to these winners. When you suffer from this malady you are sending your school community the message, "We're in the middle of a swamp and things aren't going to get any better!" This is a time for humor and the most therapeutic use of humor at school is to direct it against yourself! Since smiles are more contagious than frowns, even the most severe cases of "seriosa nervosa" can ultimately be cured!

6. Make Everyone Feel Genuinely Welcome! A quick way to change the chemistry of a school community is to change the way people are greeted, whether in person or on the phone. Many unscheduled visits and phone calls are about negative things and sometimes individuals have become accustomed to answering the phone or greeting a newcomer with a tone that says, "Well, what is it now?" Teach everyone, starting with yourself, to answer the phone and greet visitors with high positive energy and watch the chemistry change!

7. Color Your Corner. Authentic principals who want the school culture to be one of acceptance and pleasure do away with the formal desk and leather chairs and gold trophies in their offices, which can be intimidating. Instead, their atmosphere is one of warmth and good will. Comfortable chairs where the talkers can sit side by side, changes the tone from one of formality and tension to one of comfort and welcome. Treat everyone as you would a guest in your home.

8. Look for the Right Way, Not Your Way! Be open to the suggestions of the school community and all those with whom you interact. "What do you think is the best way for us to go about dealing with this situation?" That is a great door opener for people to tell you what is really on their minds! It is far more important to enhance your reputation as a great listener than as a great talker because it is your listening that gains you trust and respect from all members of your community.

Ms. Rosen concluded, "As you can see from this list and from the surroundings, I recognize that this is not my school or my teachers or students. This school and everyone associated with it have joint ownership of the setting. I believe in having an open environment where there are no cliques. I have found that a school is much more productive when it is thought of as communal property.

"These values and practices have made an impact on this school and community. I believe that you can talk with most anyone in the school or the community and he or she will tell you that we feel strongly that what we are doing is the most important task. We help nurture these young people to gain skills, strengths, and wisdom to live fruitful and meaningful lives that will contribute to the well-being of those who come after us.

"I have enjoyed meeting with you, Lee. Please give my regards to those back at the university. We welcome visitors and helping hands every day!"

Journal Notes

1. Keep your focus on the school's vision.
2. Do not reward yourself for doing the wrong things well.
3. "Whose monkey is that, anyway?"
4. Make sure the search is worth the scratch.
5. Quality is measured by longevity, excellence, and meaningfulness.

SKILL BUILDER 7.1

A Checklist for Sorting the Wheat From the Chaff

1. Is this a task that is best performed by the principal?
    a. If yes, why?
    b. If no, who else can appropriately take care of it?
2. Do you have teachers who have shown interest in becoming administrators?
    a. If yes, are you mentoring them to be ready for new roles by allowing them to help with administrative tasks?
    b. If no, why not?
3. Do you allow your assistant principals to assume a wide variety of responsibilities in order to better prepare them to become principals?
    a. If yes, do you meet regularly to discuss their strengths and areas of need?
    b. If no, why not?
4. Do you allow your secretary, custodian, and other staff members to make decisions that are most closely related to their areas of responsibility?
    a. If yes, are you meeting with them regularly to provide support and guidance without taking over their tasks?
    b. If no, why not?
5. Do you provide regular staff development opportunities for all of your faculty and staff to keep them abreast of new information related to the administration and implementation of appropriate learning opportunities for high school students?
    a. If yes, do you see to it that all feel supported in their desire to learn, change, and risk trying new methods?
    b. If no, why not?

8

Giving In/Standing Firm

It is better to know some of the questions than to know all of the answers.

—James Thurber

The cohort was nearing the end of its term together. One of the ways the Guide had chosen to help the students polish their leadership and presentation skills was to allow them to lead class discussions on particular seminar topics. The topic for this night's discussion seemed almost a contradiction in terms—giving in/standing firm. Lee had volunteered to lead this discussion and, in addition to a thorough research of the literature, had recently held a focus session with a group of principals to gain more voices from the field on this topic than would be available in a single interview with one administrator.

As he began the session, Lee followed the model Dr. Lane had utilized throughout the semester. He asked students to share their thoughts about the title of the session in relation to authentic principals. Several students responded that they thought both terms were inappropriate for the authentic principals the cohort had been discussing throughout the semester. Others suggested the terms seemed too dogmatic. Authentic principals would neither be so weak as to give in nor so stern as to stand firm and unyielding; they would be much more flexible and supportive.

Lee waited patiently for his peers to consider the phrase more deeply. After a few minutes, some of the members began to suggest other interpretations of the phrase.

For example, it might mean that an authentic principal has to assess the situation and follow his or her intuition in making decisions. It could refer to situational leadership, where it is important to be flexible in certain situations but maintain an unyielding stance in others.

"What do you think an example of a 'standing firm' situation might be?" Lee questioned.

"Well, most of today's schools have zero tolerance for bringing weapons to school. That would certainly be an example of standing firm," one peer answered. Most of the group nodded in agreement.

"I agree," responded Lee. "But what if a student brought a Civil War gun to school that no longer had a firing pin? Might that be a time to be a little less rigid with the zero tolerance rule?"

"Not in my judgment," replied the student who had brought up the zero tolerance rule. "I don't think that particular rule should be broken. There are simply too many ways that you can hurt or frighten students and faculty in today's world of confrontation, even if your weapon is inoperative. An alternative might be for the school to have a policy in place for such situations. For example, the teacher could notify the school administrators that the student's parents were going to bring the artifact to the school as part of a class study of the Civil War. The weapon could be taken to the school office by the parents and the teacher could secure it when it was time to share it with the class. This would be an easy policy to follow and no one would need to be placed in either real or imagined danger."

"That might be a good solution to that situation," replied Lee. "In my discussion with the principals in the focus group this past week, I found that they have created some commonsense procedures for coping with potentially dangerous and threatening situations. These specific plans were constructed in conjunction with the students, faculty, parents, central office, fire and police departments, emergency services, hospitals, and other community agencies. Once developed, these procedures are published and widely distributed to members of the school and community to share a common core of understanding as to how they have agreed to work together to meet challenging situations.

"Can anyone think of an example when a principal may decide that the best action in a particular situation is to give in?" Lee queried. The members were quiet as they considered this question.

One student ventured, "I believe that this scenario is much less likely to occur, but I imagine there are times that a principal makes a statement that is too sweeping in its implications and has to retract it. For example, the principal may have stated that no students could leave the lunchroom for any reason during their scheduled lunch period. However, this may prove to be too cumbersome to enforce because of the many reasons that students might legitimately need to leave the lunchroom. It might be appropriate to change that rule and let individual situations be handled at the discretion of the lunchroom supervisor."

"That is an excellent example and one that the focus group principals used. Some of the decisions that we make as administrators can seem innocuous at the time. However they can take on a very different character when you multiply them by the number of students we have in our schools every day."

Related Passages

Lee moved to a discussion of the readings for the week. "A recent book by D. W. and R. T. Johnson (1995), *Reducing School Violence Through Conflict Resolution,* offers many helpful suggestions on how to make schools safer and more inviting learning environments. The authors suggest two interrelated approaches: (a) violence prevention, and (b) conflict resolution programs. They propose that four basic conditions need to be provided in order for such approaches to be successful."

1. Admit that destructive conflicts are out of control.
2. Implement a violence prevention program.
3. Become a conflict-positive organization.

4. Implement a conflict resolution program.
    a. Create a cooperative context.
    b. Institute conflict resolution/peer mediation training that teaches students how to negotiate and mediate and teachers how to arbitrate.
    c. Use academic controversy to improve instruction.

Lee went on, "The Johnson brothers believe very strongly that the most appropriate way to begin to successfully rid our society of the widespread violence that plagues us is to teach conflict resolution. They included the following quote by Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a reminder that we are all in this together: 'If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all people, of all kinds to live together, in the same world at peace' (p. 13).

"The Johnsons have illustrated a productive way for schools to go about handling conflict on a long-term basis through the following steps."

SCHOOLS THAT RESOLVE CONFLICTS CONSTRUCTIVELY ESTABLISH A CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM THAT CREATES A COOPERATIVE CONTEXT, INSTITUTES CONFLICT RESOLUTION, & USES ACADEMIC CONTROVERSIES THROUGH

- **Peer mediation training**
- **Student negotiation**
- **Student mediation**
- **Teachers arbitrating**

Lee paused for the other members of the cohort to read the material he flashed on the screen. "The authentic principal realizes that students need to learn to handle violence in their lives in a reasonable way and the school and the community must support the idea that conflict resolution skills must be taught. Johnson and Johnson suggest many excellent, proven ways to successfully introduce such proce-

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dures into schools. One part of their model, easily utilized in most classrooms, is the introduction of academic controversies into the existing curriculum." He began to read from the book:

> Teachers can use conflict academic lessons to promote motivation and higher-level reasoning, leading to higher achievement. Such activity also helps students experience positive outcomes from conflict, thus increasing a positive attitude toward it. . . . A key to effectively using controversy to promote learning is combining social interdependence and intellectual conflict. The more cooperative elements and the fewer competitive elements there are, the more constructive the conflict will be. An example of structured academic controversy can be an English literature class where students are studying a unit on civil disobedience. They learn that in the U.S. civil rights movement, individuals broke the law to gain equal rights for minorities. . . . The teacher assigns one pair of students to prove how civil disobedience can be constructive in a democracy; the other pair would seek to prove how civil disobedience can be destructive. . . . The results of such carefully structured academic controversies indicate that when students are trained, they apply conflict resolution strategies not only in school settings but also in situations outside the school. (p. 106)

Lee moved on to a discussion of another assigned reading: "Hill and Hill, in *Creating Safe Schools* (1994), discuss the violence in schools with a health metaphor."

> Just as our personal wellness depends on constant maintenance of many aspects of our lives, making our schools safe also requires consistent orchestration of a complicated set of interwoven factors. . . . School wellness begins within each building. Essentials for school wellness include:
>
> - A sense of community
> - Care and consideration extended to each person within the school environment

- Substantive activities occurring within each classroom
- School facilities maintained and tended
- Parental and neighborhood ties developed (p. 16)

"It is clear that the authentic principal must take a strong leadership role in creating the culture in both the school and the community," Lee said as he continued his presentation. "He or she must send the message that violence is not going to be tolerated. Through the utilization of the skills of those individuals in the school and the community, violence can be controlled. The authentic principal has to stand firm on this issue and model the conflict resolution methods that the school family agree represent their best selves.

"Another effective way authentic principals teach responsible negotiating skills is through developing the skill of asking smart questions. Discussing situations with the individuals involved and gathering all of the facts allows the principal to listen to and analyze alternatives for dealing with potentially volatile situations. Several of the principals in the focus group discussion recommended a model presented by Dorothy Leeds (1987). She makes the following points."

1. Prepare—Know your purpose and person you are questioning.
2. Deliver—Formulate your question and ask it appropriately for the particular individual.
3. Listen—Pay close attention to the answer.
4. Clarify—Probe, if you need further information or clarification.
5. Respond—Take the appropriate action.

"Although some principals may not be accustomed to seeking as much input as these experts from the literature and the principals from the field suggest, the payoff is well worth the effort. Instead of putting out possible fires, calling the police, and turning the school into an armed camp, the authentic principal is demonstrating once again that the most important job for school leaders is to provide a safe environment for the students. Thus, one of the most powerful skill builders for authentic behaviors is demonstrating that you are willing to assess when to stand firm or when to give in. Such behaviors demonstrate that you are willing to do whatever is required to create an inviting school setting that provides security as well as life skills.

"During my planning for this session, I read an article titled, 'Ten Principles to Principal By.' This article was written by Jack Markham (1980), an active high school principal. He had several good points that I believe are relevant to this discussion. He suggested that very often we allow the issues to be confused. He told the story of meeting with a peer principal who was worrying about the age-old problem of students roaming the hallways during class. The principal said that too many times when he reprimanded a student for being out of a class without an excuse, the student would reply that nothing ever went on in the classroom anyway. The principal told Markham that he knew it was often the truth and that he didn't feel that he had a leg to stand on with the student. Markham pointed out that the student being out of class was an attendance problem and that nothing worthwhile ever happening in the class was a personnel problem. Although it was the responsibility of the principal to see that both problems were handled, they were two separate problems.

"Another principle that he discussed was, 'Know what you are willing to fight for.' His example of this axiom was to point out that over the years schools adopt a number of policies and rules for convenience. On the other hand, there are basic policies and rules that enforce the philosophy and vision of the school. Principals would be foolish to talk themselves into a corner by insisting that students clean out their lockers every 6 weeks versus every 8 weeks. This is a clear example of a convenience rule. However, it is important to stand firm on rules that require students to take responsibility for their actions. Markham's advice to principals is to sort out ahead of time which rules and policies belong in which category and use their energy seeing that those supporting the school philosophy and vision are implemented.

"Max DePree in his landmark book *Leadership Is an Art* (1989) has a wonderful way of expressing what the art of leadership entails. In the context of giving in versus standing firm he talks about 'a civilized institution.'"

> Leaders must take a role in developing, expressing, and defending civility and values. In a civilized institution, we see

> good manners, respect for persons, an understanding of "good goods," and an appreciation of the way in which we serve each other. Civility has to do with identifying values as opposed to following fashions. Civility might be defined as an ability to distinguish between what is actually healthy and what merely appears to be living. A leader can tell the difference between living edges and dying ones. To lose sight of the beauty of ideas and of hope and opportunity, and to frustrate the right to be needed, is to be at the dying edge. To be a part of a throwaway mentality that discards goods and ideas, that discards principles and law, that discards persons and families is to be at the dying edge. To ignore the dignity of work and elegance of simplicity, and the essential responsibility of serving each other, is to be at the dying edge. In a day when so much energy seems to be spent on maintenance and manuals, on bureaucracy and meaningless quantification, to be a leader is to enjoy the special privileges of complexity, of ambiguity, of diversity. But to be a leader means, especially, having the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who permit leaders to lead. (p. 22)

"DePree is very aware of the authenticity factor in leadership and he pulls no punches about the ability of the leader to be able to give in when appropriate and to stand firm when necessary. His skill in walking his talk has been inspirational to many individuals in businesses. The appropriateness of his words for the authentic principal cannot be ignored. The goals he expresses are those we want our schools to live by, and through thinking deeply about the applicability of his work in the high school setting, we can utilize his suggestions every day.

"The last passage that I would like to share with you is an excerpt from *The Tao of Leadership* by John Heider (1985). It is particularly relevant for the authentic principal."

> The wise leader is like water;
>
> Consider water: water cleanses and refreshes all creatures without distinction and without judgment; water freely and

fearlessly goes deep beneath the surface of things; water is fluid and responsive; water follows the law freely.

Consider the leader: the leader works in any setting without complaint, with any person or issue that comes on the floor; the leader acts so that all will benefit and serve well regardless of the rate of pay; the leader speaks simply and honestly and intervenes in order to shed light and create harmony.

From watching the movements of water, the leader has learned that in action, timing is everything.

Like water, the leader is yielding. Because the leader does not push, the group does not resent or resist.

These three qualities are invaluable to the leader:

- Compassion for all creatures
- Material simplicity
- A sense of equality

Compassion, sharing and equality sustain life. This is because we are all one. When I care for you, I enhance the harmonious energy of the whole. And that is life.

Journal Notes

1. It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers.
2. Develop specific plans and procedures for handling emergencies.
3. If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships.
4. Use a cooperative context to teach conflict resolution skills.
5. Do not confuse the issues.
6. Compassion, sharing, and equality sustain life.

SKILL BUILDER 8.1
Giving In/Standing Firm Self-Assessment

1. Do I make decisions after reflecting on the options available to me?
2. Do I consider the consequences of my decisions before announcing the decisions?
3. Do I involve others in brainstorming options in the decision-making process?
4. Do I sometimes allow students to suggest consequences of an inappropriate decision they might have made?
5. Do I stand firmly behind the faculty and staff in their decisions?
6. Do I involve faculty in considering options for correcting inappropriate decisions they might make?
7. Do I have an active and involved faculty advisory team?
8. Do I have a student council that is allowed to suggest alternatives and make certain decisions about school activities and experiences?
9. Do I have a mentor or a peer group that I can turn to when I need support and help in challenging situations?
10. Do I encourage personal growth in students, faculty, and staff by encouraging risk taking?

9

Learning for a Lifetime

> *If I had my life to live over again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once a week, for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness and may possibly be injurious to the intellect and more probably, the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.*
>
> —Charles Darwin

Dr. Lane chose "Learning for a Lifetime" as the topic for the next-to-last session of the cohort for the semester. She considered the topic to be of special importance because now more than ever before the aspiring leaders needed to embrace the opportunities that constant change will offer them. Resistance to change had been a stumbling block in the lives of many individuals in every field of endeavor and she was pleased to have the opportunity to work with the students to accept change as natural and positive as a major goal of the cohort program.

Dr. Lane divided this session into two parts. The first half of the session required students to examine their experiences from the semester and discuss some of the relevant material related to learning for a lifetime. For the second half of the session, she had invited guest speakers from various agencies to share with the students their perceptions of lifetime learning.

As she waited for the students to settle into their seats, she observed the expressions on their faces as they read the Darwin quote. "Who would have thought such a pure scientist as Darwin would have moved to a position of questioning his life's accomplishments?" asked one of the students with a certain amount of awe in his voice. "It certainly does cause you to wonder how many of the same aspects of his life he believes he omitted are being left out of our lives," commented Lee.

"Actually, there is new research coming out every day that speaks to the need for choosing a well-rounded life in order to function better in everything that we do," Dr. Lane commented. "Gail Sheehy (1995), in her myth-shattering new book about life passages, discusses an interesting sociological study of individuals over the age of 90. These individuals reported the things they remember most vividly about their lives were the times they took risks. They all reported successes and failures in their lives, but because they needed to break the unrealistic bonds of restraint from time to time, even when the first attempts were not successful, they were adaptable. They examined the situations without looking for blame or excuses and attempted new ways to reach what seemed to them to be extremely important resolutions. They were not afraid to be adaptable, nor did they feel uncomfortable in asking for help and support. Most often, they were team players, recognizing the strength in collegial alternatives. Now, they are able to live in the present, using the past as a prologue for the now. These centenarians are overwhelmingly optimistic and possess a marked sense of humor, enjoying telling funny stories about themselves. To them, life seems to have been and continues to be a great adventure.

"Deepak Chopra (1993) suggests that the healthy approach to stressful and sometimes uncontrollable situations in our lives is to learn to accept that life is not a series of random events but a path of awakening. He maintains that 'if every day is an awakening, you will keep growing' (p. 35).

"Both Chopra and Sheehy report that daily reflection and a sense of wonder were characteristic of the happiest of all individuals. Einstein made the observation that 'The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes remain closed' (quoted in Bartlett & Kaplan, 1982, p. 635).

"It is interesting to note how many scientists who have spent their lives with a very narrow focus attempting to illuminate one aspect of the world we live in point out the need to become more complete by enlarging the lenses through which to view the world. Lewis Thomas (1990), whom we have talked about before this semester, also talks about learning for a lifetime."

> Learning, come to think of it, is really what we are best of all at. Language is a wonder, of course, but learning is what language allows us to do, and learning is what we need most as a species. Science is part of this . . . but not yet the most important. There are a great many things to learn about ourselves, and about the earth, and about our obligations to the earth and to each other, for which we will not have our instructions from science alone, maybe not be from science at all. I suspect we will pick up information of the sort needed for a future from changes in our feelings about ourselves in very large numbers, and about the earth as a very large, and by and large good-natured (although in our terms also very tough) creature. (p. 182)

"It is obvious from our readings and interactions with successful and authentic principals this semester that those individuals who make important differences in the lives of their schools and communities live personal lives of fulfillment. Norman Cousins (1983) spoke of this need to put meaning into lives."

> The great failure of education throughout most of the world is that it has made people tribe-conscious rather than species-conscious. It has attached value to the things man does not to what man is. Man's institutions are celebrated but not man himself. Man's power is heralded but the preciousness of life is unsung. There are national anthems but no anthems for humanity. Respect for the fragility and importance of individ-

> ual life is still the first lesson to be learned. Compassion is not quantitative. To help put meaning into a single individual may not produce universal regeneration, but it happens to represent the basic form of energy in a society. It also is the test of individual responsibility. (p. 11)

Lee listened to the passages with intensity. "These passages certainly give us much to consider," he commented. "They help us to realize that the possibilities of life and learning are legion and perhaps our main goal during the years we work with children and youth in public schools should be to help them come to a realization that learning in the most important sense of the word is never completed. Those individuals who do not pursue their dreams, their callings to meet the challenges required of members of society, as parents; community leaders; and caring, compassionate members of the community of humankind, cheat themselves. Through their hesitation, for whatever reason, or apathy, fear, or goals of lesser importance, they most likely will not be able to live the lives of fulfillment that the centenarians in Sheehy's study have lived and are living."

"I agree," said another student. "It seems as though everything that is the most important in our lives must rest on a foundation of integrity and courage. If we have integrity, then we will possess the authenticity that we have been discussing this semester. That authenticity will provide us with the courage to meet the challenges of the past, the present, and the future by keeping our focus on a vision that includes success for everyone. I recall something Bennis (1984) pointed out."

> A vision must articulate a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for an organization . . . where individuals feel they can make a difference and that they can improve the society in which they are living through their participation. . . . Vigor and enthusiasm will then come naturally and make the results of work mutually reinforcing. (p. 76)

Another student spoke up: "You know, when we began this seminar, I was very skeptical of the ideas we were discussing. I had a feeling the technological changes that have been so rampant in our lives in the past few years had made such ideas as authenticity, compassion, and nurturing completely out of touch with the reality of our world. Now, I see that we need such capacities more than ever. As I was reading excerpts from Nasbitt's (1982) *Megatrends* recently, it dawned on me that he had written in 1982 much of what we have been discussing. For example, he said, 'As the level of technology becomes increasingly complex, the need for the sensitive treatment of human beings is increased' (p. 117). He refers to this phenomenon as 'high tech—high touch.' His insights certainly ran counter to earlier fears that the rise of technology would mean a bleak future for individual freedom and creativity, and predictions that with ever-increasing automation most human beings would become mere cogs manipulated by a power elite. We are finding that as automation increases, people need to be better educated than ever before. In addition, organizations find themselves dependent on the wise decision-making of a high percentage of their workers, since operations are far too complex to be understood by a small group of managers. Thus, human freedom and responsibility has actually been increased by the rise of technology."

"It does seem as though we have come full circle," commented Dr. Lane.

"If you recall, we began our discussions together with a definition of authenticity and came to the consensus that an authentic principal is many things but, perhaps most especially, the authentic principal is one who is focused on the needs of the students and the beckoning future that the school community can help them to enter.

"Next, we moved to the question of vision, not only for schools, but for communities and for the individuals who inhabit the communities." Dr. Lane repeated the quote from Cunningham and Gresso (1993) that summarized the content of their studies: "Synergy requires that people are able to function in an easy, almost unconscious synchronization with each other, translating individual energy into collective results. The vision and the culture orchestrate the synergy between personal and organizational goals, resulting in truly outstanding performances" (p. 97). She then reminded them of Sergiovanni's (1992) point in *Moral Leadership:* "We need to be in touch with our basic values and with our connections to others. In other words, we must become more authentic with ourselves and others. If we are successful, we will be able to transform schools from ordinary organizations into learning communities" (p. 29).

"I have been giving this experience a great deal of thought," a cohort member commented. "I have come to the conclusion that the type of leadership we are talking about and the type that is most needed for the future is creating safe havens in our schools that encourages every member of the school community to become the most successful individual within a group setting that it is possible for them to become. I see that as a serious challenge, but I believe that one of the most effective ways that we can go about achieving it is through what we have been doing during this semester. We need to make sure that all members of our learning community realize that their voice is just as important as the next person's, and if they choose not to participate in the dialogue and the learning that is taking place through the strength of the group, they will be cheating not only themselves but the group as well. That is a challenge we must accept if we are to become the principals who celebrate the great opportunities that we have." The student recalled Senge's (1990) comment about systems thinking:

> Systems thinking is a shift of mind—from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to being connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something "out there" to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience. A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality and how they can change it. (p. 93)

"You have really put into words the thoughts that have been tumbling around in my head," smiled another cohort member. "It is amazing to me the way we came to this university such a short time ago and now we are a cohesive group able to support and help each other in ways that I have not previously experienced. If nothing else would encourage us to believe that the type of schools we have been reading about, visiting, and talking about are truly possible, the experience of bonding that we have had through this semester has demonstrated that ideal. In many ways, this experience fits with a quotation that I wrote in my journal from Howard Gardner (1993):

'Superior leadership performance occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group and when they stir employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group' (p. 136). In my judgment, that is what we have done this semester—we came together with a single focus, to take a graduate class that would help us gain a credential that we desired as individuals. We have discovered that there is so much more to the process of learning than that single goal each of us has as individuals. We have learned many things, but one of the most important for me has been the strength of the group—not only in discussions, but in problem solving and generating options and dreams for the future. Any principal who chooses to neglect this aspect of school leadership is really missing out on a great deal of the excitement and the realization of the ideals that brought him or her to the profession in the first place!"

Dr. Lane smiled at this enthusiastic outburst by the student and the smiling faces and nodding heads of the other students as they indicated their agreement of their peer's analysis. "You have clearly given these ideas a great deal of thought and research. I agree with your analysis that because we have had group discussions about our readings, questions, ideas, and visits, we have learned more than if we had each gone in different directions to pursue information by ourselves. There is certainly a time and place for personal reflection. You have demonstrated that through your journal entries and the questions that your reflections have raised in your consciousness. However, people seem to do extremely important work in group settings.

"After you take a short break, we have a few members of the community who will share some additional thoughts on the nature of lifelong learning as they interpret it and what their visions are for the future."

Voices From the Field

When the students returned from their break, they saw three guests seated at the conference table that had become their site of communication this semester. Once they had joined the guests at the table, Dr. Lane spoke. "We have three visitors with us tonight who are going to share their perceptions of lifelong learning as a focus for schools from their special perspectives. At the left of the group is Dr. Smith. Dr. Smith is the director of the Adult Learning Center for the County School System. Seated next to Dr. Smith is Ms. Wynne, director of the Drop-Out Prevention Center, formed jointly by three surrounding counties. Last is Judge Black, the Juvenile Judge for the city."

Turning to the guests she smiled as she said, "We certainly appreciate the time that you have taken to be with us tonight. As I told you when I extended the invitation, these students have aspirations of becoming school principals and we have been focusing on many of the attributes we believe they will need to meet the needs of the young people they will be leading. We are very informal in our approach to topics and I do not have a set agenda of questions. I am sure your comments will stimulate the students to think deeply about the roles they are aspiring to hold and what they might want to consider in relation to the agencies that you represent."

Dr. Smith was the first to speak. "It is a pleasure to be with you tonight and talk to a group of individuals who value learning for learning's sake. I spend a great deal of my time attempting to motivate individuals who somehow 'fell through the cracks' of the system we have in place for educating all individuals. Many of them come from families that have very low incomes and possess a strong bias against schools as places where they don't belong, but now they are realizing that if they are going to have a better life for themselves or their children, we are their last hope.

"There are many paths they follow to get to our services, but the one I want to focus on tonight is their discomfort with the process of school as they experienced it. When they talk about their school experiences, they seldom remember anything that was meaningful or fun. We would like to talk about childhood and youth as a time of wonder and experimentation as young people find out about the world and where they fit into the scheme of things. Most of the adults in our program did not see themselves as fitting in as children and youth. There is often a type of pride in these individuals that makes it very hard for them to admit that they have needs. They want to be self-sufficient but have not been successful at doing that. It has taken a lot of courage for them to come to us for help, and even though we work as carefully and conscientiously as we possibly can with each one, we still have many who will come for a few weeks and then drop out. When we follow up to see what happened to them, the response is usually along the lines of 'I wasn't going to learn anything there; I might just as well stay home and grow a little tobacco' or some such excuse. Sometimes, we can convince them to return, but more often than I like to think about, we are not able to change their perceptions of themselves as born losers.

"If I can get you to think about anything from my comments tonight, it is to work with your students in such a way that they don't feel they are born losers who don't really have a place in our schools. I am quite sure these individuals are challenging to the school personnel and that you are attempting to meet their needs in many meaningful ways. Nonetheless, we have too many who are hopeless about the future and it is such a huge waste of human potential. Somehow, in your schools, if mechanisms were put in place that allowed these students to be part of the school scene in a more positive way, possibly through Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs or some other mentoring process, they would realize they do possess worth."

Ms. Wynne spoke up at this point. "As you know, Dr. Smith, my role is to try to work with these students before they wind up at your agency. It is very challenging for us to find enough volunteers to work with these students and it is very hard to get the students to accept help on any sort of consistent basis. Many of them come from families that are dysfunctional and are unable to provide the support the students need and actually don't seem to put forth any effort to make things better for their children because they do not have hope in the future either. Those students that we seem to have the most success with are those who can find there is some skill they might have, whether it is drawing, sports, cooking, or whatever, and we can hook them up with a mentor who capitalizes on that interest or skill to build up their self-concept and their other skills.

"Unfortunately, we have a large number of students in our program who are still in their early teens and are pregnant. Most often, there is no support from the fathers of the babies and the parents of the pregnant teens are either accustomed to this as a lifestyle or disown them and they end up living on the streets or with relatives who can barely provide for their basic needs. We have had limited success with classes for expectant mothers because we have very limited funds for our program. But when adult volunteers work with them and teach them about mothering and how to raise a healthy baby, they often take a hard look at where they are going and decide they need to make some changes.

"My request of these principals would be much the same as Dr. Smith's. Please try to help these students realize they matter, that we really do not have 'throwaway' kids in our schools. I know these students are most likely the hardest ones to work with and take the most time, but we have to find some nurturance for them before they discover that what they thought was love and nurturance was not that at all."

Judge Black smiled at the group. "I am tempted to say, me too! All of the things my colleagues have pointed out are things I deal with every day and the resources, especially from the families of the students who end up in my court, are all but nonexistent. Seldom do I have students who come from loving families supportive of the special needs of teenagers. We certainly do not have enough caseworkers to take the in-depth time that is needed by these young people if they are going to experience any kind of success in the adult world. So many of the students who end up in the courtroom are themselves the children of parents who were often in the courtroom before them when they were teenagers. Schools have been asked to shoulder burdens that are definitely outside the realm of reading, writing, and arithmetic. I suspect that this is because everyone has some experience with schools, and these days with such a large number of dysfunctional families in our society, schools are often the only constant that exists. My personal opinion is that it would make sense to make our schools part of a connected network of services that is at least located on the same campus, if not in the same building. That would make the linkages between caregivers so much easier to forge in a preventive manner. So often, by the time I see these teenagers, it is too late to anticipate that they will make the necessary commitment to making changes in their lives that will be in their best interest. They have very little trust in the system. From their point of view, they seem to think we are all out to get them.

"If we could put our voices together and work together to link the agencies in a meaningful way, I believe it would make a tremendous difference. I am aware that some communities have done this successfully, and I anticipate that in the future we will see more of these alliances that will help all of us do the things that will really make a difference in the lives of our youth. I understand that one of the topics that you have been discussing in this program relates to learning for a lifetime. I think that is what this is all about. We must continue to search for new ways to meet the needs of our nation's young people. Constantly searching out new information, trying new ways of meeting old problems, encouraging the youth who are successful to accept some responsibility in relation to those who are struggling—these are all possibilities. Living is about learning. I do not look at the world the way I did when I first became a judge. I had a much more clear-cut image of who is right and who is wrong. Now, I know that there are very few times that there is not a lot of gray in the situation and plenty of blame to go around. I am not blaming the schools. I believe you have been asked to do more than is possible. I would encourage you to seek help from those who will help you. I encourage you to become politically active in the name of youth. If not you, then who is going to stand up for these young people? All too often, the answer is, no one."

Dr. Lane spoke up at this point. "I would like to thank our guests for coming tonight. I know you could tell by the expressions on the faces of the cohort members that they were very moved by the experiences you shared with them tonight. You are right, schools have too much to do, but then, so do each of you. What binds us together is our common desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people. Thank you for reminding us that there are solutions and alternatives to solving some of the problems these young people bring to us that have not even been thought of yet."

The cohort members rose to their feet and gave a standing ovation to their guests as they exited the seminar setting. It was clear that this was a night that would see a lot of writing in reflective journals taking place.

Journal Notes

1. Every day should be a new awakening.
2. Learning is really what we are best of all at.
3. We need an anthem for humanity.
4. Individuals need to believe they can make a difference.
5. We must become more authentic with ourselves and others.
6. A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality and how they can change it.
7. We must teach our youth that there are no "throwaway" kids.
8. We must work in synchronicity with all care-giving agencies to better meet the needs of young people.
9. Everyone has a right to believe he or she counts in the larger scheme of life.
10. We need to trust in each other and accept the future as a promise.

SKILL BUILDER 9.1

The Authentic Principal's Skills in Learning for a Lifetime

1. I try to learn something new every day.
2. I try to teach something new every day.
3. I read material that gives me greater understanding in other areas of endeavor.
4. I try to inspire others to learn new skills.
5. I learn and practice new leisure-time activities regularly.
6. I monitor my activities so as to balance work, play, arts, and philanthropy in my life.
7. I display kindness and consideration to others as they attempt new skills.
8. I model a well-rounded life.
9. I do not make automatic decisions that new ideas are not worthwhile.
10. I demonstrate interest and support for the interests of my peers, family, and friends.

10

Reflecting: What Was, Is, and Might Be

If we can be in the world in the fullness of our humanity, what are we capable of? If we are free to play, to experiment and discover, if we are free to fail, what might we create? What could we accomplish if we worked with life's natural tendencies? Who could we be if we found a simpler way?

—Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996, p. 32)

Dr. Lane smiled to herself as she watched the cohort move into the seminar setting for the last session of the semester. The students were unusually quiet and the bantering and camaraderie that had become a natural part of their interactions was missing. This very often happened during the last meeting of a cohort for a semester. These students who had come together only a few short weeks ago were now staunch allies who loved to discuss and take apart ideas and concepts and come together again with a stronger understanding of what they had been examining. The cohort would continue its studies next semester, but it would be with a different professor and the focus would be on a different aspect of leadership. So, this night was a natural time to pause and take stock of where they had been, where they were now, and where they anticipated they were going. These students would never be quite the same again. They had learned to question, to analyze, and to experience in ways that would help them become stronger leaders and stronger role models wherever their paths might lead them.

As Dr. Lane began the discussion, she asked the students to share their thoughts about the reflective piece of the program of studies they had engaged in during this first semester. Lee was the first to speak up. "I really thought that keeping a journal was going to be a burden and I will admit at first I wasn't sure how to proceed with it. The really neat thing about the reflective journal from my point of view is that when I make notes, no matter how cryptic they may be, I can recapture the reading or the experience in my mind's eye very quickly. I have been impressed by how many of the 'authentic principals' that we have visited use reflective journals to keep them centered on what they want to accomplish and recall what their plans and goals were in relation to specific situations that would not easily be salvaged if the journaling had not been done. I anticipate that this is the beginning of a habit that is going to serve me well as a person and as a leader." Other cohort members nodded their heads in agreement.

Another student spoke up: " I think it helps me to distill the essence of the readings and the experiences so that the feelings that were evoked at the time I first encountered the material can be recaptured each time I reread the notes I have made in my journal. I find myself adding notes to sections as my skill base has grown over the semester and I am a more thoughtful and analytical reader and listener than I was before I began journaling." Again, the cohort members nodded in support of the analysis of their peer.

Dr. Lane smiled as she listened to their comments. She walked to the front of the room to turn on the projector to share another quotation with the students as a stimulus for discussing the passages for the session. She turned to the cohort and commented, "I am very pleased that you see the value of this process. In a world that is changing as rapidly as ours, it helps to keep track of what we think is important and monitor our choices as to how we spend our time. It also encourages us to look for those passages that have a special meaning for us as individuals. We will not all be moved by the same experiences and passages, but when we take a few minutes to reflect on what we are experiencing and reading, it provides each of us with a record that we could not recover easily through any other medium."

Related Passages

Turning to the Wheatley quotation that she had projected for all of the members to observe, Dr. Lane noticed how quiet they became as they read and assimilated her words. Once again, Lee was the first to speak up. "I think that is an extremely optimistic way to look at the world. It seems natural for us to look at the seriousness of what we are about and completely lose sight of the excitement and enthusiasm that we had when we began an endeavor." Another student chimed in, "I enjoyed reading the Wheatley passages very much. Her ideas about accepting freedom and allowing ourselves to play with our ideas and experiments, without all the stress and fear of failure, are energizing and make me want to examine my life more often from the point of view she expressed. I have already begun asking myself how I can demonstrate this joy and excitement to all of those whom I will be leading so that our school will be one of success through simplicity. I like the mind pictures that come with that phrase." The rest of the Cohort seemed equally enchanted with the ideas expressed.

Another student interjected at this point, "I thought the comments by Ron Brandt were inspiring (1992) when he spoke about the need to empower all individuals and work at building and nurturing the community as an integral part of the school culture."

> We humans are prone to pursue our own narrow interest and be suspicious of those different from ourselves. But we are also naturally cooperative and feel good about working with others for a higher purpose. And maybe we are gradually learning how to go about—deliberately, thoughtfully— building the kind of communities where learning flourishes. (p. 10)

"It seems to me as though he, too, is saying there is a part of ourselves that we sadly neglect and that only through conscious attention to the goals our 'higher purposes' lead us to consider will we be able to do those things that we should be doing naturally."

Another student who had been listening thoughtfully to the discussion spoke up. "As I was reading and reflecting on the passages for tonight's discussions, I had the most unusual picture pop into my mind. Have you ever watched young children of 2 or 3 years of age at play? It is interesting to observe how completely unaware of each other they can be. Even though several children may be playing with building blocks from the same pile, for example, they are oblivious to those around them. Each is focused on his or her own masterpiece and is not remotely interested in what the other children are doing. As you know, this well-known age stage is called 'engaging in parallel play.' But it struck me that schools that do not create a common culture are behaving like these young children. They are involved in parallel play—they are often doing the same thing, with the same goals and foci, but they are doing their tasks side by side—not together. It is obvious that young children need to learn the skills required for productive group endeavors, but it seems a reasonable expectation that a group of adults could have moved beyond parallel play and begun to realize the benefits of groups accomplishing tasks more quickly; more efficiently; and, yes, much more companionably."

"Sarason (1971) pointed out a similar idea when he wrote the passage we read for tonight," another student commented. "He was discussing change."

> The problem inheres in the fact that history and tradition have given rise to roles and relations, to interlocking ideas, practices, values, and expectations that are "givens" not requiring thought or deliberation. These "givens" (like other categories of thought) are far less the products of characteristics of individuals than they are of what we call the culture and its traditions. . . . One of the most difficult obstacles to recognizing that the major problem in our schools inheres far less in the characteristics of individuals than it does in its culture and system characteristics in that one cannot *see* culture or systems the way one sees individuals. Culture and systems are not concrete, tangible, visible things in the way individuals are. (pp. 227-228)

"As I read those words," the student added, "I saw in my mind's eye the millions of classrooms throughout our nation that are so alike: cubicles that hold 30 or so students and a teacher, rows of desks, chalkboards, and a door that closes early in the morning and opens to interact with the rest of the individuals in the other cubicles only on rare occasions. To me, that common picture of what our schools look like today is primarily because that is the way the schools were for our parents and teachers and their teachers and parents. It seems to be the appropriate way to do things because that is all they have ever known. We will have to be extremely conscientious and energetic to get the members of these cubicles to come out and see what exciting things they can accomplish if they work and play together.

"In reading the 1997 Yearbook from ASCD, I was struck by an article by Richard Sagor. He was describing the success and failure of action research in schools and what seemed to be the variables that supported one or the other."

Another student interjected, "It fits in with what we have been discussing tonight about what has been in the past, the present, and might be in the future."

> Recently educators have begun using the term "self-renewing" to describe schools that have instituted a positive change ethic. . . . By seeking, welcoming, and then collegially discussing data on school and teaching performance, these teachers have achieved the freedom to challenge existing paradigms. But, perhaps more important, they have achieved the freedom to reinvent their work lives and the work lives of the teachers who follow them into those of true professionals. That, I believe, is an educational change truly worth striving for. (p. 190)

"I felt as though he was talking directly to our cohort, saying that we need to keep our eyes on the prize and not be afraid to change the status quo. The important thing, as we have said so often, is to make sure that our students leave our high schools ready to contribute to the larger society and confident that they can live with the changes that will occur in their lives. If this type of modeling is carried out by the teachers and leaders of the schools, they will be much more likely to achieve the type of success that they envision for their lives."

"You have made some very interesting observations about the value that reflecting on the past, present, and future can give to your effectiveness as school leaders," Dr. Lane responded. "It is time for your break now, and when you return some of the individuals who have served as your 'voices in the field' this term will be here to discuss this topic from their perspectives."

Voices From the Field

When the students returned from their break, they were pleased to see a number of the principals they had visited during the semester gathered around the conference table. Dr. Lane began by saying, "Since tonight is the last night for this term, we are especially grateful to those of you who have been so willing to share your thoughts with us throughout this semester and to take a bit more of your precious free time and spend it with us tonight. As you know, we are focusing on reflection as a concept tonight and we would appreciate your sharing your thoughts with us about how you find time to do it and what purpose it serves for you."

Dr. McCoy was the first to speak up. "I had never kept a journal prior to engaging in my studies here at the university and, at first, I saw it as just a lot of busywork." She smiled as many students nodded their heads in agreement. "However, it did not take long for me to realize the benefit of taking just a few minutes to stop and put down a couple of thoughts or quotations that seemed important to me from our discussions, our readings, or the speakers we had. That was a number of years ago and now it is a habit that I am so thankful I have. It helps me to keep centered on what my vision is all about and what I have done in particular situations that has enhanced the vision or caused me to recognize that I should have tried another option. I believe that the act of keeping a journal is beneficial to everyone. We encourage our students to keep journals and the teachers keep journals. When we have discussion groups, and we do that quite a bit at our school, the journals are always in evidence, because there might be something that will come up and we can refer to a previous conversation, and certainly there will be something from this discussion that will be worth writing about. I think it does help us to focus on the past, the present, and the future. We can look at options more clearly and with greater understanding of the other members' positions because we don't have to rely solely on our memories for what is past."

Dr. Phillips spoke up at this point. "I can report many of the same experiences with my reflective journaling. Like you, I was not sure of its value to me when I began, but now it is a part of my day that I find extremely peaceful. I sit down, close my eyes, and play back the day in my mind. Then, I write not only the events that I want to remember but the feelings that the memories of the day evoked when I reflected. I find that more and more I can trust my feelings, or intuition or whatever you wish to call that emotion, to point me in the right direction. The faculty and students at the school have also gained experience in how to do this effectively and we have regular discussion groups about special readings that we have found, questions that we may have, or projects that someone would like for us to undertake as a group. I can think of no tool that is more useful in this communication process."

Ms. Blevins was the next to speak. "I could repeat exactly what my peers have said because I, too, find my reflection journal an indispensable tool that I rely on constantly. However, I would like to point your thinking in the way that you can encourage both students and teachers to keep a reflection journal and a portfolio as a demonstration of their skills. We read in the literature that the average person is going to change jobs at least seven times during his or her work life. The processes of being able to articulate your thoughts and demonstrate your skills are going to be needed by tomorrow's workers as never before. Therefore, at our school we take the emphasis a little further than just the personal and the school and look at how what we are doing, saying, and writing about fits in with what we anticipate the future holds for us. It has caused some lively discussion groups to get started, and interest groups, often organized and run by the students themselves, use their journaling and portfolio development skills as benchmarks for where they have been and where they want to go. We have had extremely good feedback from the community when our students go out looking for jobs, because they have skills that I am convinced they would not have been able to demonstrate were it not for this process. So, you see, you can expand your horizons to the future quite easily with such simple tools. Naturally, the leader has to be enthusiastic and supportive of the process and it takes a little time to get everyone to understand the benefits, but that is a small price to pay for the extraordinary benefits the process provides."

Ms. Calloway spoke up. "There was a time when I felt less hopeful about what the future holds for our nation's children, grandchildren, and future progeny. But I have made a conscientious effort to walk my talk and talk my walk and I find that many of my peers are doing the same thing. Not every day provides us with reasons for optimism, but slowly and surely I think we are beginning to recognize as a nation what really matters in creating a promising future for our youth. Maybe, I am more conscious of the good things that I see happening in our schools and in the preparation of new teachers and principals and other school leaders. But whatever the reason, I believe that we are coming to a place where we have more common understandings even as we live with the constancy of change. The basic attributes of authentic principals—visioning, caring, empowering, and so forth—are not attributes that need to change. They provide the foundation that allows us to hold our heads a little higher and walk a little taller as we realize that we are staying true to our calling. We have important work to do, but we know how to enjoy our work and nurture relationships and make others realize that they bring their own individual gifts to the table. Authentic principals truly believe and demonstrate their belief daily that we cannot have any throwaway kids in our nation."

Dr. Lane stepped to the front of the room as Ms. Calloway finished speaking. "I want to thank all of you for being such wonderful role models and for your willingness to continue to reach out to the future by helping us prepare tomorrow's leaders. As we end this last session for this semester, I would like to share some thoughts with you that were first spoken nearly 20 years ago by Nicholas Hobbs (1982) when he was pioneering ways to work with troubled youth. His words are just as meaningful today—and will be tomorrow—as they were when he uttered them, because we must always focus on what are the needs of our young people if they are going to lead happy and successful lives."

> Life is to be lived now, not in the past, and lived in the future only as present challenge.
>
> Trust between [young people] and adults is essential, the foundation on which all other principles rest, the glue that holds teaching and learning together.
>
> Competence makes a difference; children and adolescents should be helped to be good at something, and especially at schoolwork.
>
> Time is an ally, working on the side of growth in a period of development when life has a tremendous forward thrust.
>
> The cognitive competence of children and adolescents can be considerably enhanced; they can be taught generic skills in

the management of their lives as well as strategies for coping with the complex array of demands placed on them by family, school, community, or job; in other words, intelligence can be taught.

Feelings should be nurtured, shared spontaneously, controlled when necessary, expressed when too long repressed, and explored with trusted others.

The group is very important to young people; it can be a major source of instruction in growing up.

Communities are important for children and youth, but the uses and benefits of community must be experienced to be learned. In growing up, a child should know some joy in each day and look forward to some joyous event for the morrow. (p. 22)

Journal Notes

1. Who could we be if we found a simpler way?
2. Reflective journals help leaders to stay centered on their visions.
3. Record passages that have special emotional impact for you.
4. Concentrate on how to focus on freedom and joy for all members of the school community.
5. Humans are naturally cooperative and feel good about working with others for a higher purpose.
6. Schools without a cooperative culture are often engaged in "parallel play."
7. Authentic principals can achieve freedom to challenge existing paradigms.
8. We need to keep our eyes on the prize and not be afraid to change the status quo.
9. The process of being able to articulate their thoughts and demonstrate their skills is essential for our students to succeed in the world of tomorrow.
10. The basic attributes that distinguish authentic principals are the foundation of what schools need to personify for the greater good of society.

SKILL BUILDER 10.1
The Authentic Principal's Reflective Thinking Analysis

1. I make it a point to think about the ramifications of my actions on the future of the students in our school before I make a major change in what we do.
2. I analyze actions from the perspective of the past, the present, and the future.
3. I encourage reflective thinking by faculty, staff, and students.
4. I have the courage to question "the way things are" when I believe they are not in the best interest of everyone involved.
5. I share my reflections and learning with members of the community so they may join in "analyzing the big picture" with those in our school.
6. I encourage brainstorming and mind games to stretch the thinking that we do in relation to decision making.
7. I believe that most people want the future to be a happy one for those who come after them and are willing to work to see that it is.
8. I write in my reflective journal on a regular basis.
9. I encourage journal writing in the faculty, staff, and students.
10. I believe the future beckons to all of us as a promising place.

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